

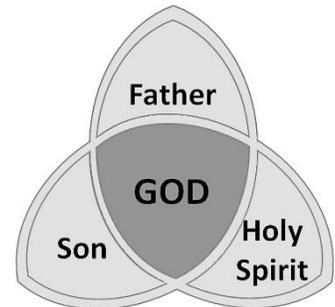
## Mysticism and Another “Spirit!”

### Background

The word “trinity” is not in the Bible. But it describes the Christian understanding of the Godhead:

- The **three supreme Beings** of the universe:

God the Father  
 God the Son  
 God the Holy Spirit



- They are so unified, the Bible notes them as being “one God” (James 2:19).

The Godhead is a mystery. There is *little* about their *physical nature* that we know – except that at Creation they said: “*Let us make man in our image*” (Genesis 1:26).

- **Little information** has been given to us about *where they live*, except that we call it “Heaven.”
- **Little information** has been given to us about how they administratively *work together*, except through their **relationship to man**:
  - **The Father** – it appears, is the source of *all revelation* and *information*. He appears to be the “head” God.
  - **The Son** (Jesus, the Messiah) – brings that *revelation* to man. He said that the Father was greater than He (John 14:28c, 15:1). He volunteered to be man’s redeemer.
  - **The Holy Spirit** – took the *Son’s* place, implementing God’s wishes. He additionally provides unique *power* to mankind to develop a *character like God’s*, exhibiting the “*fruit of the Spirit*” (Galatians 5:22). Administratively, this divine being provides “*gifts*” to the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:4-9).

This divine arrangement is given to us as special insight to view them as to how **they function** in their work with us.

We vaguely understand the *mystery*, the *unfathomable secrets* of God, mostly through things we can cognitively perceive (reasoning, association, etc.). But – there is a **spiritual dimension** that transcends feelings, logic or physical senses that we accept by faith. Paul explains it this way:

“*By faith we understand that the worlds were set in order at God’s command, so that the visible has its origin in the invisible*” (Hebrews 11:3 – NET).

Inspiration of the Holy Spirit can teach us more than we see or feel through the messages in the Bible! However, that inspiration will never disagree with God's Word.

### **Focus: The Holy Spirit**

This ***Spirit*** is a wonderful connection between heaven and earth:



- He is called a Comforter, which God sent at Jesus' request: *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever"* (John 14:16).
- He represents *"truth"* that emanates from heaven: *"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me"* (John 14:15, 15:26).
- He personally intercedes with the Father for us (Romans 8:26-27).
- Peter understood this Comforter, this *"Spirit of truth,"* as God: *"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God"* (Acts 5:3-4).
- The Holy Spirit actually has the attributes of God:
  - Eternal (Hebrews 9:14)
  - Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7)
  - Omniscient (I Corinthians 2:10-11)
- The Holy Spirit is involved in works of God:
  - Creation (Genesis 1:2)
  - Incarnation (Matthew 1:18, 20)
  - Resurrection (Romans 1:4, 8:11)
  - Salvation (Romans 8:1-27)
- The Holy Spirit is a Person:
  - Speaks (John 16:13, Acts 1:16, Hebrews 3:7-11)
  - Can be lied to (Acts 5:3)
  - Can make decisions (Acts 15:28)
  - Intercedes for Christians (Romans 8:26)

### **Satan's Unrelenting Desire: Present Himself as a Divine Spirit**

That "spirit" story began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were still perfect:

- “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘**You will not surely die.** For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil’” (Genesis 3:4-5 – NKJV).
- Satan **possessed the “serpent” [took control]**. It not only spoke but did exactly what Satan wanted it to. It ate of the forbidden fruit, then picked and gave fruit to Eve.
- No wonder when John was being told of the “dragon” being cast out of heaven, it says: “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:9 – NKJV).

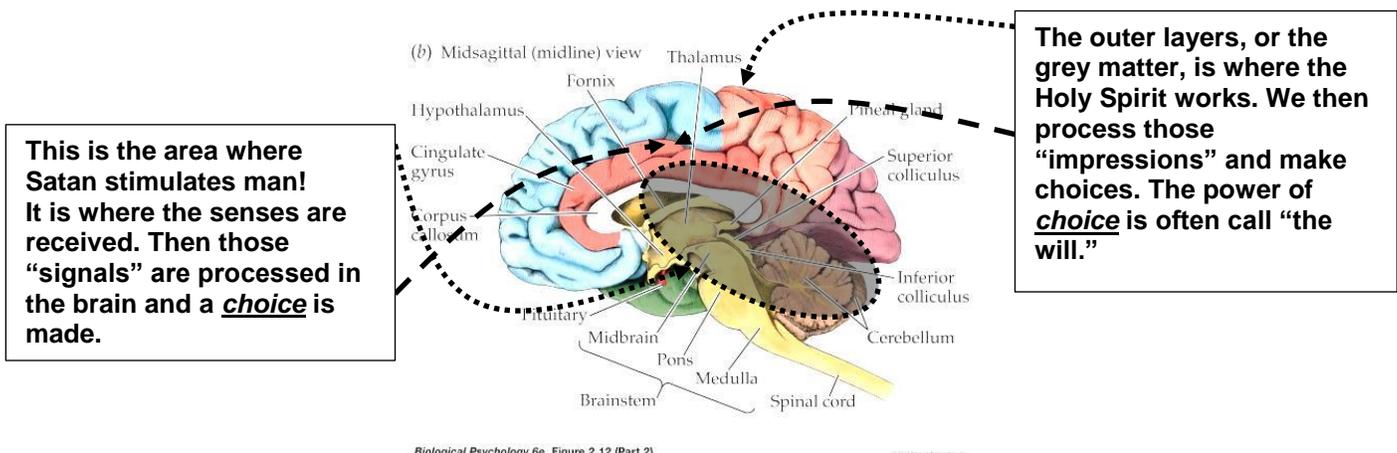


During the antediluvian period we conclude that Satan worked in unusual ways. God noted: “my Spirit shall not always strive with man” (Genesis 6:3). Why?

“The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that **every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time**” (Genesis 6:5 – NIV).

As Satan possessed the serpent, this verse suggests that he can possess the minds of people! **AND that insight is the concern of this study!**

### Where Supernatural Powers Influences the Brain



Biological Psychology 6e, Figure 2.12 (Part 2)

- **Satan** does everything to make the temptation enjoyable, minimizing what God says, blinding one to its consequences and forcing his will on the person. **His objective? To ruin the individual for eternity!**
- **Jesus** does everything to make truth as clear and enticing as possible, presenting the consequences of sin and always preserving man’s freedom to choose. **His goal is to have each person be part of His eternal family!**

**There is another tool that Satan relishes:**

## **Spiritualism**

The Bible talks about Satan's influence in a myriad of ways, **especially through temptation to sin**. Here we are going beyond that to look at **manifestations** that are evil and that will deceive much of the world just before Jesus comes.

**What might be one of the most powerful ways that Satan might deceive us?**

- By performing the supernatural on a person's mind and body!
- Today, many call it "spiritualism."

We assume that the Israelites had contact with Satanic spirits when living in Egypt. God gave to Moses warnings about this:

*"Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God"* (Leviticus 19:31 – NKJV).

*"When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn the abhorrent practices of those nations. There must never be found among you anyone who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, anyone who practices divination [like palm reading], an omen reader [horoscope], a soothsayer [clairvoyant, psychic], a sorcerer [medium], "one who casts spells [hypnotizes], one who conjures up spirits [brings up spirits], a practitioner of the occult, or a necromancer [brings up spirits of dead]." "Whoever does these things is abhorrent to the LORD"* (Deuteronomy 18:9-12a – NET).



The Story of King Saul is familiar to most Christians. At a time of fear and a sense of impending doom, he defied the God of Israel and went to the "witch of Endor" (I Samuel 28:3-25). He lost his life shortly thereafter.

When the apostles encountered people who had powers of divination, contacting the spirits, they cast these spirits out as demons (Acts 16:16–18). Many Scriptural references point out reasons that Christians should not seek contact or counsel with spirits, namely, that the spirits contacted are satanic and will give deceptive/destructive information.

*"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God"* (I John 4:1 – NIV).

The ancient Biblical counsel against demonic spirits has not changed. Satan knows his time is short (Revelation 12:12) and an intensification of manifestations is predicted:

*“The arrival of the lawless one will be by **Satan’s working with all kinds of miracles and signs and false wonders, and with every kind of evil deception directed against those who are perishing, because they found no place in their hearts for the truth so as to be saved**” (II Thessalonians 2:9-10 – NET).*



Beginning especially in the 1840s with the Fox Sisters in New York to the present, there has been an increasing interest in making contact with the “spirit world.”

- This is an ultimate deception!
- Communicating with “people” who have passed away, especially of friends and relatives, is an almost overwhelming prevarication against truth.

Eleanor Roosevelt often went into the Lincoln Bedroom in the White House to sense the presence of Abraham Lincoln. Hillary Clinton “was known to talk” with Eleanor Roosevelt, who died in November 1962, and supposedly gave her weekly messages.<sup>1</sup>

- Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the House, claimed she spoke with the spirits of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Alice Paul.
- Intriguingly, in 2009 a study reported that Democrats are far more “in touch” with the dead than Republicans, and they also visit fortunetellers more frequently.
- The number of Americans who say they have interacted with a “ghost” has doubled in the last thirteen years, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life revealed in its “Many Americans Mix Multiple Faiths” report.<sup>2</sup>

This is **why** it is so important to understand the doctrine of the “state of the dead” in the Bible. This is why Bible writers said:

1. *“For the living know that they will die, but the dead do not know anything” (Ecclesiastes 9:5 – NET).*
2. *“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. For David did not ascend into the heavens” (Act 2:29, 34 – NKJV).*

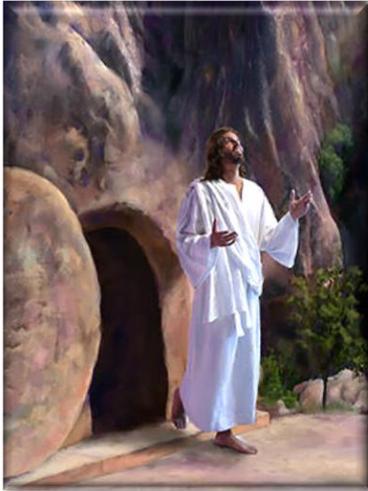
<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wnd.com/2012/10/eleanor-roosevelt-talked-to-hillary-this-week/#rziozv1YGepYgjm.99>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRav-34ufcE>

3. “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen” (I Corinthians 15:12-13).

The **resurrection from the dead** is one of the Bible’s most precious promises and doctrines.

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:25).



“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first**. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever” (I Thessalonians 4:16-17 – NIV).

### **It’s All about Satan Controlling the Mind**

**Here’s a challenge:**

- **If** a person lives on as an intelligent being, why not make contact with humanity?
- **If** a person lives on – why not provide supernatural help to friends, relatives or family left behind?

Clay tablets called the Epic of Gilgamesh were found in the Mesopotamian Valley (Iraq today). They are dated around 2100–2000 B.C.

- That was two to three centuries after the flood.



- Those tablets tell in a poem about people speaking with the dead.
- Noah was likely still alive at that time.

What would you do if a deceased relative appeared and began to talk with you in exactly the same voice and mannerisms they really had?

### Another challenge:

If there are supernatural phenomena [like in the sky or voices that can be heard over a wide area] and the world is dazzled with wonder at something “beyond reality,” how would you relate to it?

### Another challenge:

How should we relate to “mind control” that is called hypnotism? This is where ***the will of an individual is turned over to another person?*** This can be done through television, in mass meetings, even in churches!

The Bible says that soon there will be an external parade of heathen power that Satan will put on. How will we react?

- *“He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth **them that dwell on the earth** [the whole world] by the means of **those miracles** [more than one] which he had power to do in the sight of the beast” (Revelation 13:13-14a).*
- *“I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the **spirits of devils**, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth **and of the whole world**, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:13-14).*



**One of the greatest challenges is to recognize what is from God and what is from Satan!**

- The difference between truth and error, the difference between the appeals of Satan and those of God can be “razor thin.”
- The Bible gives us some very good rules to follow:
  1. ***Charasmatic leaders will arise that say and do deceptive things. Even intelligent Christians could be victimized. “For false messiahs and false***

*prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Matthew 24:24 – NIV).*

2. **God has a specific way to deal with the slightest question of Christian legitimacy:** *“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (I John 4:1 – NIV).* **How?**
  3. **The test:** *“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20 – NKJV).*
- If a leader, preacher, teacher or mentor, especially if charismatic, does not follow the Bible and relate to the Decalogue, a genuine reflection of God’s character, it is because they have compromised truth.

## **Mind Control**

This is another form of spiritualism.

- Eve had an irreverent curiosity – the avenue of her heart was opened.
- ***She argued with a talking serpent.*** One can never win a debate with the devil – he’s too smart.
- She was convinced God was wrong and that the animal was right!
  - a. Pausing to look on the tree, the avenue of her soul opened wider.
  - b. Engaging in an experience that was supernatural, being deceived was now possible!
  - c. Even though what the animal said contradicted God ...
  - d. Her mind became trapped! There was tension between two concepts: (1) What God said and (2) what the serpent said. She chose what her **senses** perceived!!! That’s exactly how Satan works!

***God will not judge man because he conscientiously believes a lie, but because he resists or neglects the opportunity to learn truth!***

- That’s why we have these studies.
- That’s why we rely so heavily on the Bible – God’s Word!

**Ways that the mind can be controlled:**

- Hypnotism – submitting to the will of another
- Submission – e.g., to political leaders or to religious mystics
- Addiction – e.g., pornography, television or drugs

- Beliefs without proof, e.g.:
  - Advertisements
  - Global warming
  - Political statements that we don't affirm
  - Manifestations of the "Spirit" that are not Biblical
- Music that appeals more to body than to mind. ***There are certain rhythms that shut off the higher centers of the mind.***
- Seeking flattery, etc.

**All these tie to one word in the Bible – submission:**

- ***The Bible says:*** "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).
- This is an imperative to think and use our power of choice and act on it!
- This demands:
  - Submission to God's ways.
  - Resisting the devil in every way the Spirit brings conviction.

**If we don't, the devil remains nearby to tempt.**

- Eve remained near the devil.
- A willful or "choice" act.
- *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"* (Ephesians 6:12).

**Key concepts of the influences of spiritualism (from Satan's world)**

- Any agency/influence that makes no difference between righteousness and sin (i.e., you can be saved in sin and not from sin).
- "Lovism" – everything is "love." Sin is never addressed (in Christian circles) – a sentimental religion.
- Submitting mind to religious leaders without studying the Word of God!
- Worship that ***depends*** on emotion, performance and sensory manifestations.



**Remember – faith is an “act of the mind,” not a feeling of the body!**  
(Hebrews 11:1).

### **Catholic Mysticism – a Warning**

The Roman “Christian” Church began to adopt pagan rituals shortly after paganism was outlawed in 380 A.D. by the Roman emperor, Theodosius I.

- The veneration (worship) of dead people (called by the church “saints”) began. Human leaders, many whom we now know were evil, judged people who had died as “worthy to be called holy or ‘saints,’” assuming that their title gave them eternal salvation.
- From the first century there were mystical interests in Mary, the mother of Jesus. Time brought in sensational declarations that became dogma, such as that she never sinned, that she is now in heaven and oversees the saints on earth and even blasphemous teachings, implying she is a Co-Redemptrix with Jesus!



***Then came “Spiritual Formation,” introduced by Ignatius Loyola, founder of the “Society of Jesus” (aka the Jesuits) of which Pope Francis is a member!***

- This introduced a form of “contemplative worship.”
- On the surface it seems benign – but its ultimate focus is on “self” and the “god” and “power” within us.
- It denies the wonderful words of Paul: *“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”* (Colossians 1:27 – KJV).

***All aspects of “contemplative meditation” is a pathway into the occult – spiritualism.***

The Catholic Church was behind much of the New Age Movement – which has been transformed into movements such as:

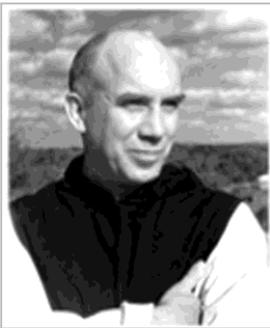
1. Contemplative Meditation in front of a candle
2. The burgeoning mysticism related to yoga
3. Resetting the mind through “neurolinguistic programming”
4. Self-hypnosis
5. Hypnotism as a profession and entertainment

6. Interest in eastern thinking and religions
7. Promotion that God can be found *in everything* (pantheism)

***This took on a modern look at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965).***

“In Hinduism men explore the divine mystery and express it both in the limitless riches of myth and the accurately defined insights of philosophy. They seek release from the trials of the present life by ascetical practices, profound meditation and recourse to God in confidence and love. Buddhism in its various forms testifies to the essential inadequacy of this changing world. It proposes a way of life by which man can, with confidence and trust, attain a state of perfect liberation and reach supreme illumination either through their own efforts or by the aid of divine help.... The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions.”<sup>3</sup>

***Then the evangelical world was enamored by mystic priest Thomas Merton with these thoughts:***



“Now I realize what we all are. And if only everyone could realize this! ... I suddenly saw all the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God’s eyes. If only they could see themselves as they really are. If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed.... I suppose the big problem would be that we would fall down and worship each other.”<sup>4,5</sup>

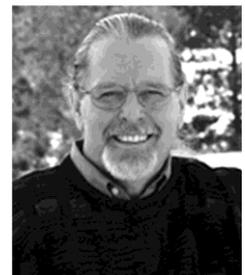
***Salvation does not come from the “darkness” of meditating on self – but from the mighty counsel of Jesus.***

- “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).
- Again: “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

**Protestants have Joined in this Movement**

1. **Richard Foster**, Evangelical pastor, said:

“Contemplative Prayer immerses us into the silence of God.  
How desperately we in the modern world need this wordless



<sup>3</sup> Vatican II Document # 56, October 28, 1965, Vol. 1, Par. 2, p. 739.

<sup>4</sup> Merton, Thomas; *Catholic Mystical Monk*.

<sup>5</sup> Merton, Thomas; *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, Image edition, Dec. 1989 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 157-158. This book has official Roman Catholic approval.

baptism! ... Progress in intimacy with God means progress toward silence.”<sup>6</sup>

Foster asks rhetorically, “What is the goal of Contemplative Prayer?” And he answers, “To this question the old writers answer with one voice: union with God.... Bonaventure, a follower of Saint Francis, says that our final goal is ‘union with God,’ which is a pure relationship where we see ‘nothing.’”<sup>7</sup>

- Jesus said: *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost”* (II Corinthians 4:3).
- In Contemplative Prayer God is depersonalized. He is non-judgmental. Therefore, there is no sin to worry about.

*“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen”* (Romans 1:25).

2. **Kenneth Copeland**, during a crusade, said:

- “You don’t have a god in you, you are one.” “When I read in the Bible where I Jesus says, I AM, I say, Yes, I am too!”<sup>8</sup>
- The late Paul Crouch, Benny Hinn, John Wimber, etc., have all brought mysticism into their worship experiences.<sup>9</sup>

The Lord God has proclaimed:

- *“I am the LORD: that is my name: and **my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images**”* (Isaiah 42:8).
- *“**For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God**”* (Exodus 34:14).

3. **Brian McLaren**, *The Church on the Other Side*: “We are exploring off the map, looking into mysterious territory on the other side of all that we know.”<sup>10</sup>

4. **Dan Kimball**, *The Emerging Church*: We are now “moving from logic and rational [reason] to the realm of experience. Mystical ancient forms of multi-sensual worship are to be used.”<sup>11</sup>

*“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”* (Philippians 4:8).

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<sup>6</sup> Foster, Richard J., *Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), p. 155.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>8</sup> Copeland, Kenneth; *The Force of Love* (Fort Worth, TX: Kenneth Copeland Ministries, 1987), audiotape #02-0028, side 1.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/newsletter123107.htm>

<sup>10</sup> McLaren, Brian; *The Church on the Other Side*, Revised, Preface, Zondervan, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Kimball, Dan; Beckwith, Ivy; Altson, Renee N.; *The Emerging Church*; 2003, Zondervan.

“Christianity must move from the heavenly, eternal kingdom, to the kingdom of God on earth” by: (1) obscure language, (2) evasive conversation and (3) mesmerizing congregations.

*“This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”* (Matthew 15:8-9).

*“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (II Timothy 3:7).

5. **Michael Ray**, evangelical “Christian” conducting “Creativity in Business” seminars, teaches that “your wisdom-keeper or spirit guide – an inner person ... can be with you in life.... We meditate to unfold our inner being.”<sup>12</sup>

He also supports the use of Tarot Cards.

Many emerging church ministers and leaders received training from Peter Drucker, a **mystical non-Christian**, motivational speaker.

6. **Rick Warren**, pastor of Saddleback Church: “The Bible is of diminishing importance. Behavior and love are the most important.”<sup>13</sup> He has promoted the use of social enhancing skills in the worship experience.

*“Thus saith the LORD; **Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited”*** (Jeremiah 17:5-6).

7. **Doug Pagitt**, pastor and author of *Church Re-Imagined*:

- The Bible is less and less important.
- Christianity needs to be reworked.
- Let’s use the Catholic signs of the cross.
- Let’s bond with the global community (of all faiths).<sup>14</sup>

8. **Will Sampson**: Take Christianity out of the “box of the Bible.”<sup>15</sup>

9. **Leonard Sweet**, *Quantum Spirituality – New Lights*.

- “People want to experience the ‘Beyond’ in the ‘Within.’”
- Do everything to mesmerize congregations with good feelings.

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<sup>12</sup> Oakland, Roger; *Faith Undone*, Lighthouse Trails Publishing, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.standbyformindcontrol.com/2013/08/mcdf56-free-your-mind/>

10. **Robert Webbner**, *Professing Theology*, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary: Anxious to rediscover the “ancient” pagan rites.
- Rediscover “congregational spirituality” through feasts, holy weeks and the eucharist.
  - People need exposure to ancient mystics (mainly referring to Roman Catholic “saints”).<sup>16</sup>
11. **Thomas Keating**, in *Centering Prayer*:
- Brought the mystical prayer movement into the Protestant world.
  - And the praying mantra, self-induced ***altered state of mind***.<sup>17</sup>

## **Summary**

From prayers to the saints to venerating apparitions, where Mary has allegedly appeared to idols, the Catholic Church mesmerizes its parishioners. Now from what is called the Emerging Church Movement among Protestants, there is a focus on mysticism and the powers within us!

- The gospel is not incomprehensible mysticism.
- *“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”* (Philippians 2:10-11).
- The Savior is to be exalted *“far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come”* (Ephesians 1:21).

The apostle Paul warned:

- *“... because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause **God shall send them strong delusion**, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness”* (II Thessalonians 2:10b-12).
- Satanic influences are in the church and its leaders.
- Falsehood is being declared as light – and the people lie in darkness.  
*“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them”* (Ephesians 5:11).

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<sup>16</sup> Oakland, *op.cit.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*