

Christianity, Cult's and Religions – A comparative Look at the World we live in.

During this study, we'll look at 8 distinctive areas that separate and define each of 20 different religions or cults that exist in the world today. This is not to be considered an exhaustive study nor is it to be considered inclusive of all the world's religions or cults. But it is only an overview of some of the major influences in the world today. There are many more sub-cultures and "sects" of each of these that we will not have the time to discuss. Therefore let me encourage each of you to determine to investigate and learn for yourselves what those influences are and how they may affect your personal Christian belief system and Christian walk with God.

"I don't know what I don't know, and I do know what I do know!" – Doug Doran
I only know and believe what is in the Bible, and if it isn't in the Bible, I don't know it to be fact, and I'm not going to make up something just to satisfy human curiosity.

New Age: It's very attractive to the natural man who has become disillusioned with organized religion and Western rationalism. He desires spiritual reality but doesn't want to give up materialism, deal with his moral problems, or come under authority." © Neil Anderson

Founder: Based on Eastern mysticism, Hinduism, Taoism, and paganism.

Date: 1970's - Made popular by Actress Shirley MacLane (1934 -) in the 1980's and 1990's.

Location: World Wide, but mostly in the West

Followers: New Agers

Key Writings: Beliefs vary widely. There is no Holy Book. They will use selected verses of the Bible that support their point of view. Most popular writings that are used are, *I Ching*; Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoists writings; and Native American beliefs. Writings on astrology, mysticism and magic. It is a collection of many eastern religions and writings with no dogma, no set of doctrines or beliefs.

Who is God?: Everything and everyone is God. God is an impersonal force or principle, not a person. People have unlimited inner power and just need to discover it.

Who is Jesus?: Jesus is not the one true God. He is not a savior, but a spiritual model and guru, and is now an "ascended master." He was a New Ager who tapped into divine power in the same way that anyone can. Many believe he went east to India or Tibet and learned mystical truths. He did not rise physically from the dead, but "rose" into a higher spiritual realm.

Who is the Holy Spirit?: The Holy Spirit is sometimes considered a psychic force. Man is divine and can experience psychic phenomena such as contacting unearthly beings.

How to be Saved: There is no sin or righteousness, just good karma and bad karma. Therefore, we all need to offset bad karma with good karma. (***Karma** means action, work or deed; it also refers to the principle of causality where intent and actions of an individual influence the future of that individual.* Good intent and good deed contribute to good karma and future happiness, while bad intent and bad deed contribute to bad karma and future suffering.) In other words, your good works offset your bad deeds. No standard on how or who keeps track of these. New Agers can tap into supernatural power through meditation, self-awareness, and “spirit guides.” Followers use terms such as “reborn” to describe this new self-awareness. Beware of any religion that advances “self-awareness or self-actualization” above what the Bible says about who we are. They believe that Man is central to the universe; it’s all about me!

What happens after Death?: Human reincarnations occur until a person reaches oneness with God. No eternal life as a resurrected person. No literal heaven or hell.

Other facts, beliefs, and practices.

1. Practices include yoga, meditations, visualization, astrology, channeling, hypnosis, trances, and tarot card readings.
2. They use crystals to get in harmony with God (energy) and is used for physic healing, for contacting spirits, and for developing higher consciousness or other physic powers.
3. Marilyn Ferguson’s best-selling *Aquarian Conspiracy* was a presentation of the social agenda and philosophical vision of the New Age. Ferguson’s writing attained status as the unofficial scripture of the movement. The age of Aquarius became a standard mantra.
4. Neil Anderson in his book, *Walking Through the Darkness*, writes this: “The New Age movement is not seen as a religion but a new way to think and understand reality. It’s very attractive to the natural man who has become disillusioned with organized religion and Western rationalism. He desires spiritual reality but doesn’t want to give up materialism, deal with his moral problems, or come under authority” (page 22). Anderson goes on to summarize New Age thinking (pages 22–24) as follows:

(1) **It is monism.** *The belief that all is one and one is all.* History is not the story of humanity’s fall into sin and its restoration by God’s saving grace. Rather, it is humanity’s fall into ignorance and the gradual ascent into enlightenment.

(2) **All is God.** *If all is one, including God, then one must conclude that all is God.* It is pantheism—trees, snails, books, and people are all of one divine essence. A personal God who has revealed Himself in the Bible and in Jesus Christ is completely rejected. Since God is impersonal, the New Ager doesn’t

have to serve Him. God is an “it,” not a “He.”

(3) **There is a change in consciousness.** *If we are God, we need to know we are God.* We must become cosmically conscious, enlightened, or attuned to the cosmic consciousness. Some who reach this enlightened status will claim to be “born again”—a counterfeit of biblical conversion. The essential is not whether we believe or meditate, but whom we believe in and what we meditate upon. Christ is the true, personal, objective reality, as He said that He is the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through Him ([John 14:6](#)).

(4) **A cosmic evolutionary optimism is taught.** *There is a New Age coming. There will be a new world order, a new world government.* New Age thinkers believe that there will eventually be a progressive unification of world consciousness. This, according to the Bible, is a counterfeit kingdom led by Satan himself. Christ has the true kingdom, and He will one day rule on earth with peace for all who accept Him as Savior and King ([Revelation 5:13](#)).

(5) **New Agers create their own reality.** *They believe they can create reality by what they believe, and, by changing what they believe, they can change reality.* All moral boundaries have been erased. There are no absolutes because there is no distinction between good and evil. Nothing has reality until one says that it is reality or says that it is truth. If finite man can create truth, we are in desperate trouble in our society. Unless there are eternal absolutes from the eternal God, man will eventually be his own destruction.

(6) **New Agers make contact with the kingdom of darkness.** *Calling a medium a “channeler” and a demon a “spirit guide”* has not changed the reality of what they are. This is the kingdom of darkness of which Satan is the head. Those involved in this kind of activity are in contact with a world that is totally opposed to the biblical God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, who defeated Satan ([Matthew 4:1–11](#); [Colossians 2:15](#); [Hebrews 2:14–18](#)).

5. The ultimate reality in Taoism is the **Tao**, or **Way**. Broadly defined, the Tao is the mysterious **natural order of the universe**. But paradoxically, what the sages have most often said about the Tao is that nothing can be said about it. As the *Tao Te Ching* puts it:

The way that can be spoken of
Is not the constant Way;
The name that can be named
Is not the constant Name.

The nameless was at the beginning of heaven and earth;
The named was the mother of myriad creatures.
Hence always rid yourself of desires in order to observe its secrets;

But always allow yourself to have desires in order to observe its manifestations.

These two are the same
But diverge in name as they issue forth.
Being the same they are called mysteries,
Mystery upon mystery -
The gateway of the manifold secrets.

The *Tao-Te Ching* goes on to say the Tao is something formlessly fashioned, that existed before Heaven and Earth....Its name we do not know; Tao is the byname we give it. Were I forced to say to what class of things it belongs I should call it **Immense**.

In Chinese thinking, to give something a name (*ming*) is to assign it a place in the universe. This cannot be done with the Tao, as it pervades and encompasses all.

5TH DIMENSION 1969

Age Of Aquarius Lyrics

When the moon is in the seventh house
And Jupiter aligns with Mars
Then peace will guide the planets
And love will steer the stars
This is the dawning of the age
Of a Aquarius, the age of Aquarius

Aquarius, Aquarius
Harmony and understanding
Sympathy and trust abounding
No more falsehoods or derisions
Golden living dreams of visions
Mystic crystal revelation
And the minds true liberation
Aquarius, Aquarius

When the moon is in the seventh house
And Jupiter aligns with Mars
Then peace will guide the planets
And love will steer the stars
This is the dawning of the age
Of a Aquarius, the age of Aquarius
Aquarius, Aquarius

Shirley MacLaine's book, *Out on a Limb*, chronicles her reluctant conversion to New

Age belief. This book describes her travels and studies, which include science fiction-like dimensions, out-of-body travel, contact with extraterrestrial beings, “trance channeling” (séances), and a “guided tour” of the unseen world. MacLaine’s second book, *Dancing in the Light*, tells about her reach into the world of yoga, reincarnation, crystal power, Hindu mantras, and past-life recall experiences mediated through acupuncture. Her spirit guides informed her that each individual is God, and she passed along the “wisdom” that the person is unlimited. One only has to realize it. (Chandler, page 6-2).

Note: Many of the fact presented here are taken from ROSE Publishing © 2014 and the official web site of the religions presented, and other sourced.