

SUPERNATURAL: CHRISTIANITY vs NEW AGE

Six Differences Defining Biblical Truth Versus New Age Counterfeits

How do believers pursue, understand, and rightly discern spiritual gifts in the light of current new age practices? How can we be assured that our supernatural experiences are scripturally sound and Christ honoring? What is the difference between those in the new age and those who are professing Christians?

Here are some of the main differences between these two belief systems along with some biblical guidelines for consideration.

1] UNDERSTANDING OF DIVINITY AND HUMAN NATURE

- **New Age:**
 - Often embraces monism (all reality is one) and pantheism (all reality is god), leading to the belief that humans are divine or have a divine spark within them.
 - In understanding this inner potential, anyone can find divinity within themselves.
 - No god is greater than any other. Jesus was an enlightened spiritual master and historical figure, but not the Son of God.
- **Christianity:**
 - God is a personal, triune, creator, omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, holy God who desires to be in a relationship with His children.
 - Only God is perfect and fully divine. We are created in His image, but we do have limitations and must rely on Holy Spirit as our Teacher.
 - Jesus is both fully God and fully human, and is the only way to God the Father and eternal life.

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no god." (Isaiah 44:6)

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8)

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
(Ephesians 2:8-10)*

New Agers believe they can become their own gods. Thus, they are responsible for their own salvation. Christians acknowledge original sin and their fallen state, and the need for personal redemption through the cross of Christ.

2] SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL POWER AND AUTHORITY

- **New Age:**
 - Power comes from within. There is no “higher authority” one need submit to.
 - The concept of God is more a force than a person; an impersonal, universal energy or consciousness. Everyone has equal access to this source of spiritual power.
 - By getting in touch with this cosmic energy, one can manipulate and change their surroundings as well as themselves. The universe is governed by impersonal laws of cause and effect (karma). (“Law of Attraction”)
 - We have the power within to create our own reality.
- **Christianity:**
 - Spiritual gifts and power are from God, the Creator of everything.
 - Power and authority only come as the result of obedience to Him.
 - Purpose of spiritual gifts (power) is to serve others and reveal greater measures of God’s love and goodness.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

And what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
(Ephesians 1:19-21)

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
(Galatians 2:20)

New Agers resist God’s authority and believe they are their own source of power to change anything. Christians understand that we have the power of the resurrected Christ within us as we die to self and live for Him.

3] FEEDING FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OR THE TREE OF LIFE

And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good

and evil... And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:9, 16-17)

- **New Age:**

- Truth is subjective and relative. It is found by looking inward and following one's own feelings and inner wisdom.
- Deems knowledge to be power. The deeper the understanding, the higher one goes towards spiritual enlightenment.
- There is no defined morality, because there is no standard for what is right or wrong.
- Promotes spiritual and intellectual pursuits as key to health and success.

- **Christianity:**

- There is an absolute standard of morality and justice because there is a Divine Law-giver, God. Being made in the image of God human beings are meant to live in such a way that accurately represents God's goodness, truth, and beauty.
- Revelation comes through the Holy Spirit to bring greater honor to Christ.
- Lays down the need for control or understanding in favor of living by faith in the power of Christ and the work of the Spirit.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. (Proverbs 3:5-7)

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

Value and fulfillment for the New Ager comes by pursuing knowledge and enlightenment with the expectation of reaching a higher consciousness. The life of a Christian is solely dependent on surrender to the power of Christ that is found through surrender and obedience to the Living Word.

4] PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

- **New Age:**

- Emphasizes personal experience as the main source for truth. There is no standardized truth.
- Spiritual practices aim to achieve altered states of consciousness, self-realization, and communication with spirit guides or accessing information from universal consciousness.
- Focus is on self-fulfillment and personal satisfaction.

- **Christianity:**

- One of the greatest spiritual practices for the believer is prayer; a two-way conversation with a living God.
- Spiritual experiences are real but always yield to the core foundational principles of the Word, both Living and Written, the authoritative source of Truth. Boundaries!
- A true spiritual experience leads to greater humility, holiness, and love for God and others. The focus is on exalting God, not the self.
- Subjective spiritual experiences supplement and affirm areas of growth and maturity using scriptural directives for proper discernment.

There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. (Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

Omen = *practice divination, observe signs (astrology), learn by experience, practice fortunetelling*
 Charmer – *to unite, join, bind together - one who ties you in agreement to someone else*
 Medium/Necromancer = *one who operates in familiar spirits, one who evokes the dead*

When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” (1 Samuel 28:5-7)

*Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, *sorcery... (Galatians 5:19-20)*

*sorcery = the use or the administering of drugs, poisoning, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by deceptions and seductions of idolatry

But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:15-16)

A New Ager seeks spiritual experiences as proof of their personal power and knowledge. Christians seek Jesus while fully embracing encounters initiated by the Holy Spirit which confirm the heart, character, and nature of God.

Note: When in doubt, test things with the heart, character, and nature of God!

5] UNDERSTANDING OF EVIL AND SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

- **New Age:**
 - Denies the concept of “sin” seeing weakness as a human failing to correct (with more knowledge). Thus, there is no Satan or Devil – only negative energies.
 - Spiritual realities are understood as interactions with “energies” that are either positive or negative. The focus is on manifesting positive thoughts and creating one's own reality to overcome perceived negativity.
- **Christianity:**
 - “Evil” is not an illusion, but is an immediate by-product of sin, a rejection of God. Death, suffering, evil, and pain all are consequences of sin.
 - Satan is our spiritual adversary that seeks to steal, kill, and destroy us.
 - We must engage in spiritual warfare as directed by Scripture to overcome both our flesh and the works of darkness.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12)

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me. (Acts 26:17-18)

New Agers deny the existence or power of Satan, therefore there is no battle or war for their souls, only a pursuit of positivity. Christians understand there is a war for their souls, but rely on the power of Christ to deliver and set free from any and all works of darkness.

6] PATH TO SALVATION AND TRANSFORMATION

- **New Age:**
 - "Salvation" is achieved through self-awareness and spiritual enlightenment. It is the realization of one's own divinity through personal effort.
- **Christianity:**
 - Salvation is a gift of grace from God, received through faith in Jesus Christ, and cannot be earned by human works.
 - The Christian life involves ongoing transformation by the Holy Spirit, leading to sanctification and conformity to Christ's image.

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 6:23)*

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

From a biblical worldview, New Age beliefs are incompatible due to their denial of God's unique and sovereign nature, their rejection of the biblical understanding of sin and the necessity of redemption through Christ, and their focus on self-salvation rather than God's grace.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- JESUS is the biggest missing piece! Many in the new age talk about God and will even quote scriptures. But they are void of a personal encounter with Jesus.
- There are often trust issues involved with those who avoid Christianity. Building trust is a first step in winning an ear that will listen.
- Subjective experiences should never be foundational to our beliefs. However, they are powerful demonstrations and illustrations of the power of Christ that is real and now.
- Don't presume when learning of a subjective experience. Remove labels and knee-jerk reactions to dig deeper. God is always doing something new...

For more resources on spiritual gifts go to <https://wandaalger.me/resources/gifts-of-the-spirit/>)

For an interesting read on New Age Spirituality, [consider this article by Marc Sims.](#)

Examples of Unusual Spiritual Experiences in Scripture

Supernatural shaking

- **Apostles' prayer (Acts 4:31):** After Peter and John are released by the authorities, they rejoin other believers for a prayer meeting. "And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness".
- **Habakkuk's vision:** "I hear, and my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into my bones; my legs tremble beneath me. Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us." (Habakkuk 3:16)
- **Guards who took Jesus:** "The guards were so afraid of Him that they shook and became like dead men." (Matthew 28:4)

Falling in the presence of God

- **Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:28):** After seeing a vision of God's glory, Ezekiel writes, "I fell facedown".
- **The Apostle John (Revelation 1:17):** Upon seeing a vision of the resurrected Jesus, John "fell at His feet as though dead".
- **Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:3–4):** On the road to Damascus, Saul is struck by a blinding light and hears the voice of Jesus, causing him to fall to the ground.
- **The disciples at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5–6):** When a voice from a bright cloud declares Jesus as the Son of God, the disciples "fell on their faces and were terribly frightened".
- **Roman soldiers arresting Jesus (John 18:6):** When Jesus reveals his identity to the soldiers, "they drew back and fell to the ground".

Miraculous transportation

- **Enoch (Genesis 5:24):** The passage states, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him," a widely interpreted reference to miraculous, physical transportation to be with God.
- **Elijah (2 Kings 2:11):** Elijah is taken into heaven, as described: "a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind".
- **Philip the Evangelist (Acts 8:39–40):** After baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch, the Spirit of the Lord "snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more.... But Philip was found at Azotus".
- **Jesus (John 6:21):** After Jesus gets into the boat with his disciples on the Sea of Galilee, the boat immediately reaches its destination.

Strange or intense crying

- **The Israelites at Bochim:** After the Israelites complained about their enemies, the angel of the Lord rebuked them. In response, "the people lifted up their voice, and wept" (Judges 2:4). This emotional outburst led them to name the place Bochim, meaning "weepers," and to offer sacrifices there.
- **Esau's bitter weeping:** After losing his birthright blessing to his brother Jacob, Esau wept bitterly, showing deep regret for his actions, though his tears were ultimately too late to change his father's decision (Genesis 27:38; Hebrews 12:17).
- **David and his men:** After their city of Ziklag was burned and their families captured, David and his men "lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep" (1 Samuel 30:4). This shows weeping to the point of complete physical and emotional exhaustion.

Strange or intense laughing

- **Sarah's laughter of doubt:** When the Lord promised that she and Abraham would have a son in their old age, Sarah laughed in disbelief. When confronted, she denied it out of fear. However, God had the final laugh, and she later gave birth and named her son Isaac, which means "laughter," saying, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (Genesis 21:6).
- **God's derisive laughter:** On several occasions, the Psalms describe God laughing at the foolish schemes of those who rebel against him, knowing their plans will ultimately fail. For example, "The Lord laughs at the wicked, for He knows their day is coming" (Psalm 37:13).
- **The righteous who will laugh:** Jesus proclaimed, "Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh" (Luke 6:21). This promise of future, eternal joy reframes present suffering and is mirrored in Psalm 126:2, which describes the restored exiles, saying, "Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy".

Trances and Out of Body Experiences

- **The Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 12:2):** Paul speaks of being "caught up to the third heaven" but was unsure if it was in the body or out of the body.
- **Paul's vision giving direction (Acts 22:17)** After returning to Jerusalem, Paul fell into a trance while praying in the temple. In the trance, he received a vision from the Lord, instructing him to leave Jerusalem quickly.
- **Peter's vision of the animals (Acts 10:10-16):** While praying, Peter fell into a trance and saw a vision of a great sheet descending with all kinds of animals. This vision served to show him that God had made clean the Gentiles, whom he previously considered unclean.
- **John's visions in Revelation (Revelation 1:10)** John describes being "in the Spirit" and receiving visions of God's glory.