

[Defining The New Age Movement](#)



By [Nathan Jones](#)

What does the New Age Movement believe?

When you want to understand something, it is always best to go to the source. Since I wanted to understand what the New Age Movement believes, I went to a source who had first-hand knowledge as a New Ager to get my answers.

What makes such a great source even better is one who can look back at their former New Age experience through the wisdom the Holy Spirit has now given them via their salvation. I found such a source in Eric Barger, the founder and director of [Take a Stand! Ministries](#). Eric is an authority on the cults, the New Age, and rock music today. From his past as a former drug addict and rock n' roll musician who was deeply involved in the New Age movement, Eric has emerged since he gave his life to Jesus Christ to become one of today's greatest defenders of Christianity in America.



Eric Barger

In your [testimony](#) you said you started off going to church and then somehow you ended up in the New Age Movement. How did the transition happen?

I came out of a liberal church background. I was unsaved, but I went to church. I'm not sure the Gospel was preached there faithfully, though it may have been, I am just not sure. I just never met Jesus there. No one ever challenged me about a personal relationship.

When I was about 13 years old I started playing in rock bands every Friday and Saturday night. I would be out playing someplace. I was actually thinking about playing my first band when I was 11. A local DJ heard about us, and I was kind of an anomaly at that age to be out playing in a band. But, that is where it started, and by the time I was 16 or so I was a full blown drug addict.

By the time I was 21 I was involved in New Age philosophy. I moved to Seattle, and there's a lot of New Age philosophy in Seattle, and it became my religion. Now, I would have still said there was a God, and I believe there was probably a guy named Jesus, but I had adopted Eastern Mystic philosophies and techniques such as the yarrow sticks, which you throw as a form of fortune telling, and the I-Ching, which is a book that explains to you life from an Eastern viewpoint. And, so, I was into those kinds of things.

I was very much into astrology charts. It wasn't a little tiny thing in the newspaper. By the way, I used to be an Aries, and now I am a Christian! But, it wasn't a little thing in the newspaper. This was a scroll that had been made for me by a lady (I use that term very loosely) who was a bonafide black witch and I literally would follow it. I was so superstitious by this and it controlled my life. When I was playing in the band I would literally not go out of the hotel room door until I knew what my stars said for that day.

Now I know that the God who created me and controls my life — He created those stars, too! I don't need to look up at the stars. I need to look to the One who made them. I meet Christians all the time who will make some statement about, "Oh, well, he is a Libra and he will do this and he will do that." And I go, "No, that has nothing to do with it." People don't realize where they are putting their faith and trust.

So, is astrology a major component of the New Age Movement?

It is more so the occult, but many things that are occultic flow into the New Age, and many things that cultic also flow into the New Age. In the occult it is all in that genre of rebellious spiritualism. That is maybe the best way to define it.

How would you define the New Age Movement?

It is a Westernized form of Eastern Mysticism.

Often it is not taught with the Maharishi or a figure like a bong wan or an Eastern Mystic leader, now it is taught by a college professor and it is taught in business courses in our colleges. But, it is a Westernized form, so it is put into our own words. Some of the teachers and leaders are on the PBS Network, and we can start naming them by name, which I do in my DVD's and in my seminars. They are teaching these things. You look to

who their leaders and their Eastern Mystic gurus are, but they are now Westernizing this teaching, making it palatable to us and therefore making a fortune.

This get into Pantheism, that there are many, many Gods, or that you have become part of one ethereal God force. It is very much Hinduism and Buddhism which both flow into these. Most Americans wouldn't say they are a practicing Hindu, but many have adopted those philosophies as a way of life.

Shirley MacLaine, for example, would fit into the New Age category. She is out on a limb, just like her book title says, and would claim, "I am God." She would look into the sold out hotel ballrooms in the 1980's when she was traveling and and say things like, "I see the Christ in all of you." She was really talking about the "Christ consciousness," the part of the idea that we're all a part of a big cosmic oneness. I call it the "Big Cosmic Blob." It isn't very romantic when you put it like that! But, Shirley MacLaine would say things such as, "The Bible has been doctored and Jesus really was teaching reincarnation, when He taught, 'You must be born again, and again, and again and again, and again.'" What she teaches is a spiritual experience without the cost of repenting of your sin.

Probably the best definition I can give is: "any system of belief that tells you to look inside of yourself and to yourself for enlightenment and wisdom and power is generically New Age."

Now, we look to the Holy Spirit who lives in us for enlightenment, wisdom and power. But, we are not God. In the New Age, you look to the spark of God, the "God force" within you for enlightenment, wisdom or power. MacLaine's a very close counterfeit.

And that counterfeit view is held across the board today with doctors, lawyers, scientist, PhD's, Nobel Prize winners, politicians, and even people of high mental capability. Okay, I guess we can take the politicians out of that group come to think of it! But, people of high mental capability who believe in these philosophies do so because it works, but just because it works doesn't make it right. New Age philosophies do work because they are spiritually powered. They work, but by what spirit it works should be the question we ask.

It works in the here and now, but for eternity it doesn't work. People want what they want right now. Of course, we live in a culture that if the one drive-thru across the street isn't fast enough we drive across to the other one that is faster. That is where we are as a culture.

The New Age Movement indicates an overwhelming need for people to have something spiritual in their lives. They want some sort of spiritual expression, but they want one that makes no demands on their life in terms of morality.

Jesus calls us to come to God through repentance. The New Age Movement doesn't like that idea. Our culture doesn't like the idea. We want a spiritual experience without the cost of repentance of our sins.

That happens also to be one of the most unpopular words in all of Christianity today. You flip on the TV and you see ministers of some of the largest churches in American who would never mention the word "repentance" because it might offend somebody. It is an anti-growth church strategy to those churches, and we wouldn't want people to think somehow that we are unloving and telling them that they have got to change, but that's what Jesus did.

Words like "sin, Satan, demons, Hell, judgment, and repentance" are all left out in many Christian circles. But, that is the core message of Christianity and it is being cut off at the knees.

In the next part of this interview we'll ask Eric if he believes the New Age Movement has impacted Christianity.