



Seeing a World of Difference

Lesson 3

by

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Apocalypse Now

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Apocalypse Now

“Apocalypse” means “revelation” or “unveiling.” The 1960s began a pagan apocalypse that shredded what one sociologist called the “sacred canopy” of our culture. By that, he was speaking of the overarching worldview that a whole culture tends to accept. That worldview is based on certain main presuppositions—things we assume without questioning them. In the United States, the culture once assumed that there was a God outside of the world to whom we answer and who put certain moral structures into our hearts and into society. In this course, we call this way of thinking “Twoism” because it assumes that there are two separate kinds of existence: God (the Creator) and everything else (creation). But in most Western societies, where Christianity used to be an accepted, almost general worldview, the canopy of Christian Twoism is in tatters, and a new canopy of pagan Oneism is stretching over the culture.

This lesson will give you an overview of how Oneism has gradually gained influence in the West. You will be introduced to a number of thinkers and writers about whom you have probably not read. The invasion of Oneist thinking has not come only through direct contact with Eastern religions, although this has been a part of the change. There have also been subtle pagan influences that have come from more Western origins. The influence has grown now to a point where Oneism is no longer afraid to show itself in the culture. This day of Oneist pagan revelation was foretold by some strange seers.

Predictions of the Revival of Pagan Oneism

In his 1997 book *Spirit Wars: Pagan Revival in Christian America*, Peter Jones documents the rise of pagan Oneism. The *speed* of the change from a Christian or **secular humanist** culture into a post-Christian, anti-Christian, spiritually pagan one has been stunning. Events were bizarre, as if a scenario were being played out from a script. In fact, predictions were numerous that pagan, **esoteric** religion would flower in the twenty-first century. British sociologist, Christopher Partridge, predicted “the re-enchantment of the West,” by which he meant that our culture would turn away from a rational approach to issues and turn toward a more mystical, experiential approach. Others declared the revival of the **Perennial Philosophy** or the Old Religion. Here are a few thinkers and events that predicted the changes we are seeing in the West.

In the Nineteenth Century

The eccentric German philosopher **Friedrich Nietzsche** (1844–1900) predicted that the “death of God” would become common belief. His replacement candidate for the divine position was Superman (*Übermensch*)—the free, new man, whose will to power nothing could obstruct. Nietzsche’s Superman was modeled on the masculine idol of classical Greece—brave in battle, beautiful in form, and homosexual by choice. Nietzsche’s ideal recalls the eighteenth-century

theosophist **Franz von Baader**, who prophesied the return of the “original **androgyn**e” as well as an end-time Sodom and Gomorrah. In his day, Nietzsche was considered a lunatic and died, insane, in the arms of his dotting sister. His ravings are now received as the lucid essence of revived pagan theology, spirituality and sexuality.

In the 1920s

Some twenty years after Nietzsche’s death, Jessie Weston, author of eleven books on the Grail legend (the mystical human quest for divine self-realization), predicted a day when this mystery would be revealed.

In the 1930s

Freemason Foster Bailey predicted that the **Piscean Age** would give way to the **Age of Aquarius**, bringing a day of “restoration of the mysteries” and the “externalization of that superb and sublime inner process of awakening.” A Grand Master would re-establish the Mysteries and blend the “inner” with the “outer” in a great consummation. The **Masonic Order** would fulfill its true destiny. Bailey echoed revelations received by his wife, Alice, from her **Tibetan Master**, a spirit guide, that the world would be saved through the United Nations.

In the 1950s

Carl Gustav Jung, a modern **Gnostic**, predicted that the West would produce a yoga based on Christianity, beginning a “new spiritual epoch” in the history of the West. An Eastern re-interpretation of Christianity would produce a self-realizing “spirituality” through yogic techniques (of which Jung was an expert).

In the 1970s

Buddhists looked to a future moment of general enlightenment. The first Western Buddhist Teachers’ Conference met in Dharamsala, India to plan the global transmission of Buddhist teaching.

The Pagan Underbelly of Western Religious History

Pagan spirituality has deep roots in Western culture. The predictions above saw the tiny green shoots of a new pagan era that is now flowering for all to see. The nineteenth century British playwright, **George Bernard Shaw**, a notable opponent of Christianity once said, “There is only *one religion*, though there are a hundred versions of it.” What is this “one religion”? It was clearly not Christianity. Though pagan spirituality is secretive, it is sometimes known as the *religio perennis*

(the Perennial or eternal religion). Some New Agers described the astrological ageⁱ known as the **Age of Pisces** (the Christian era) as a two-thousand-year interlude between pre-Christian paganism and the pagan **Age of Aquarius**. Now, they say, the interlude is over, and the true religion will reign once more. This one, secretive religion has had many names.

The Perennial Philosophy

You will not need to memorize all these! Just remember that Oneism has many different disguises hanging in its closet. By the time you finish this course, you will begin to recognize the disguises paganism takes in your own culture and to help expose the Lie that tries to fool people into thinking it is true spirituality.

This chapter will expand on just one example: The **Perennial Philosophy**. This name was invented by a seventeenth century mathematician and philosopher, and later by **Aldous Huxley**, author of *Brave New World*, who wrote a book called the *Perennial Philosophy*, in which he defines the term as “belief in a divine Reality, substantial to all things.” He believed that the soul is identical with the divine, a notion found in one form or another in the lore of many primitive peoples and in every Oneist religion.

Peter Occhiogrosso, author of *The Joy of Sects*, a six-hundred page encyclopedia of world religions, argues that the Perennial Philosophy is like an underground well that feeds each religious stream. The pagan, mystical sources of the religious rivers are hidden from those sailing on them. Author of *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*, **Frithjof Schuon** (1907–1998) believed in the *religio perennis* and was a chief representative of the **Perennialist School**. For him, God is One and universal, and all religions are one, including all variations of the Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths, as well as Asian religions and indigenous schools of thought. If all streams come from the great river of truth, everyone can drink from that “living water.”

The Influence of the Perennial Philosophy

Many thinkers have been highly influenced by the Perennial Philosophy. Here are some of them:

- **Joseph Campbell**, popular mythologist and guru to George Lucas (who made the Star Wars movies), sees the Perennial Philosophy as the basic pagan myth.
- **Huston Smith**, the great **religious syncretist**, admits that Huxley's book, *Perennial Philosophy*, converted him from **secular humanism** to **mysticism**.
- **Stanislav Grof**, a modern **transpersonal psychologist**, associates the Perennial philosophy with mystical or **paranormal states** that he finds in North American, Mexican and South

ⁱ Astrology breaks world history into a cycle of twelve astrological ages, each of which brings major changes in the development of Earth's inhabitants, particularly relating to culture, society, politics and spirituality.

American shamanism; in **Vipassana, Zen and Vajrayana Buddhism**; in Hindu **Siddha Yoga** and **Tantra**; and in the mysticism of the Christian Benedictine order.

- Bishop **Stephan Hoeller**, of the **Ecclesia Gnostica** of Los Angeles identifies the Perennial Philosophy with the basic defining notions of ancient and modern Gnosticism.
- Prince Charles, of the British royal family, is perhaps the most surprising proponent of this philosophy. In 2006 he addressed a conference, “Tradition and Modernity,” sponsored by *Sacred Web Journal*, dedicated to applying “Traditional” first principles to the modern world. By “Tradition” in this context, Charles means the Perennial Philosophy. The prince is a patron of the Temenos Academy, which “has long been committed to the Perennial Philosophy” and has published books by the English witch, **Caitlín Matthews**, author of *Sophia: Goddess of Wisdom* (in which she predicts the coming of the **Sophianic Millennium**). “Traditionalists,” argues Charles, are not unhappily *stuck* in the past, but defend it because “in the pre-modern world, all civilizations were marked by the presence of the sacred.” Charles believes that the Perennial Philosophy will restore the wisdom of ancient pagan religions to our spiritually starved world. He specifically admires Jewish **Kabbalah** and the mysticism of the Bushmen of Botswana. Only this great Tradition, says Charles, will solve “the environmental crisis of the twenty-first century.”ⁱⁱ

These movements all believe in a kind of secret, divine knowledge given only to special people. But the Apostle Paul calls this secret knowledge “the Lie,” because it makes man divine and denies the transcendent Creator. It is the same lie as that first spoken by the Serpent in the Garden of Eden: “You will be like God.”

The Great Coming-Out Party

Many cultures have “right of passage” ceremonies to adulthood. In the old South in the US, a sixteen-year-old girl would have a “debutante” or a “coming out” party. She was socially presented to the world. The Perennial Philosophy has definitely had its coming out party! It is now recognized in the public square. It used to be that initiates who believed and taught the hidden **esoteric** tradition, known as “the one true religion,” had to hide their beliefs, but they have now arrived at a moment of *open revelation* and speak clearly about their belief in the unity of all the religions. Everyone is “out of the closet,” not just homosexuals, lesbians, crossdressers and transgenders. Addicts to pornography no longer show shame. Unnecessarily graphic reports of sexual oddities sneak into the evening news. Meanwhile, Oprah shamelessly attacks the God of her Christian past. The only taboo is taboo itself.

ⁱⁱ “An Introduction from His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales,” Sacred Web Conference, September 23–24, 2006, Myer Horowitz Theatre, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Many of Charles’ fellow speakers were experts in Sufism, the Oneist version of Islam.

The veil has been lifted and a bright future beckons. Lauren Artress, a “Christian” priestess at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco, knows a sure-fire route to futuristic spiritual life. Through her friend, **Jean Houston** (Hillary Clinton’s channeler in the White House), Artress discovered the labyrinth. This circular maze was used in pagan Greek, Egyptian, American Indian (the Medicine Wheel) and Hindu Tantric traditions. **Walking the labyrinth** helped Artress lose track of direction and of the outside world, and she found her mind quieted for mystical contemplation and a feeling of wholeness. She believes this mysticism will infuse Christianity with power for our global world of transformed human beings. She states on the Grace Cathedral website that “the *veil of mystery* that hangs over [the labyrinth] can now be lifted...we are rediscovering a long-forgotten mystical tradition that is insisting to be reborn.” The veil has also been lifted from Tantric yoga. A book entitled, *Lifting the Veil: Practical Kabbalah with Kundalini Yoga* (1991), proposes Tantric sex as the way to spiritual liberation. For Rabbi Yehuda Berg, the secret wisdom of Kabbalah, hidden for centuries, is now revealed for a society fraught with social and spiritual problems. Human transition inspires many “progressive” spiritual circles. Mysteries, no longer celebrated in secret, are, like Kaballah, available to all.

Many Predictions Fulfilled

By the end of the twentieth century, the predictions cited above had been fulfilled. Nietzsche’s “death of God” came true in the 1960s, when seminaries taught the victory of secular humanism as **Death of God theology**. Of course, the only god who “died” was the one Nietzsche railed against—the God of the Bible, the transcendent Creator. The “god within,” the **androgynous *Übermensch***, was alive and kicking. In 1974 David Miller, a Death of God theologian, triumphantly predicted that the death of God would bring the rebirth of the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece and Rome.

The Holy Grail predictions were fulfilled in Dan Brown’s popular book, *The DaVinci Code*. The Age of Aquarius, serenaded by the singer and poet Bob Dylan and other 1960s bards, slipped into the party on the coattails of Eastern mysticism. The Freemason, Henry C. Clausen, states:

Today we are at the threshold of a new era. All signs point to this fact...We look toward a transformation into a New Age using, however, the insight and wisdom of the ancient mystic. This new world view is emerging because there has been a recent correlation between modern physics and the mysticism of Eastern religions.ⁱⁱⁱ

Yoga

Jung’s foresight about yoga has long ago been proven accurate. Fifteen million Americans practice yoga, as of 2012. Spending on yoga classes increased from thirty million US dollars in 2005 to twenty-seven billion in 2012! Some yoga programs are covered by welfare. In 2005 the national

ⁱⁱⁱ *Emergence of the Mystical: The Supreme Council 33rd Degree, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, USA* (Copyright 1981 by The Supreme Council, Mother Council of the World). See biblicaldiscipleship.org/Cults_NewAge/thesis/chapter4.htm.

Christians Practicing Yoga network was launched and *Yoga for Christians* hit the bookstores. Reverend Alan Jones, a Jungian, who is Dean of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, launched a new form of Christianity based on the wisdom that emerges from the practice of yoga.

Buddhism

Buddhist hopes for the spread of the **Dharma** have also been realized. East and West have merged, as hippies went East and gurus came West. Who said Buddhists do not proselytize? By the 1990s, the Dharma was a category of books in the bookstores of the New World. Sales of Buddhist books increased thirty-five percent in 2006. JuBu books (for Jews becoming Buddhists) are now a separate category. The West throws open its doors, at tax-payer expense to the **Dalai Lama**, in eager anticipation of his “innocuous” lectures on “peace.” Behind the Fourteenth Dalai Lama’s façade as a sensitive, democratic, enlightened man of the world, stands a religious figure who believes in supernatural powers and occult practices by which to exercise influence on social and political events, for the sake of a worldwide Oneist agenda.

More to Come

Here are some cultural signs of the advance of the “Perennial Philosophy” in North America. (If you are taking this course, you could probably make a long list of your own, taken from your local schools, grocery stores, and places of “worship.”)

- Madonna has found spiritual comfort in mystical Jewish Kabbalah.
- Witches and radical feminists announce the second coming of the Goddess and her Sophianic Millennium.
- Spiritual homosexual leaders announce an omni-gendered, eschatological Sodom.
- “Christian” **Emergents** speak of a **Deep Shift** (Brian McLaren) or The **Great Emergence** (Phyllis Tickle), when a modified Christian gospel will emerge as part of the pagan program of spirituality, social justice and human unity.
- Less “Christian” religionists await the Global Shift in human consciousness, a “new alignment” based on **Quantum Spirituality**. In 2009 the Right Worshipful Tom Sturgeon of the Masons declared that the secret ritual would be published for “the greater good.”
- Apocalyptic Muslims anticipate the coming of their savior, the **Māhdi**. Buddhists and **Theosophists** believe Maitreya, their Messiah, has descended from the Himalayas and has taken up residence in the Indian-Pakistani community of London, where he remains, for the moment, *incognito*.
- Publicly identified Wiccans and **Neopagans** now hold academic seminars sanctioned by the American Academy of Religion.

- During the 2009 MTV music video awards, actor Jack Black urged the audience to join hands and pray to “dear, dark lord Satan.”
- Carl Gustav Jung’s *Red Book* is finally published, after seventy years locked in a family vault. It reveals Jung’s interest in séances, astrology and witchcraft. Jungian psychology may finally be openly practiced as paranormal/occult shamanism.

The Present: A New Pagan Era

Esoteric spirituality of all kinds is now readily available to all. You know some of these terms: *A Course in Miracles*, Alchemy, American Indian Vision Quest, Ancient Mythology, Arkashic Record, Aryurvedic Medicine, Astrology, Bahá’í Unity, Buddhism, Buddhist/Christian dialogue, Chakras, Channeling, Christian Monastic Mysticism, Crystals, Divination, Dream work, Druidism, Eastern Meditation, Eckankar (soul travel), Ecofeminism, Enneagram, EST, Feng Shui, Gnosticism (ancient and modern), Goddess worship, Hare Krishna, Hermeticism, Higher Self, Hinduism, Holism, Human Potential Movement, Hypnosis, I Ching, Iridology, Jungian Transpersonal Psychology, Kabbalah, Karma, Mandalas, Mantras, Mind-altering drugs, Neopaganism, Numerology, Occult, Pantheism, Paranormal, Parapsychology, Past Life Regressions, Reiki, Re-incarnation, Religious syncretism, Rolfing, Sacred Technologies, Santeria, Scientology, Shamanism, Sufism, T’ai Chi, Tantrism, Tarot Cards, Teilhardism, Theosophy, Therapeutic Touch, Tikkun, Transcendental Meditation, Ufology, Urantia Book, Visualization, Wicca, Yoga, Zen.

The worldview clash is clear—the revealed religion of the Bible against the occultist Perennial Philosophy of **religious naturalism**. Biblical Twoism clashes with mystical Oneism, which claims both the *democratic* right to influence public policy and the ideological right to silence the traditional view as “hate speech.” In primitive cultures, paganism has been practiced for millennia in its animist/spiritist forms. A more subtle but virulent form is found in the US, where it has been promoted by intellectuals and civic leaders with a fully developed ideology for the global future. America once sent educated missionaries of the Christian gospel all over the world. Now it sends graduates of “metaphysical spirituality” courses to promote a profoundly anti-Christian spiritual message.

As the Christian worldview is marginalized, it is ancient paganism, not secular humanism that rises to supplant it. This is the future we face: the Lie presented in attractive dress as the only true answer to the planet’s physical woes and to our highest spiritual aspirations. The urgency to create a utopian planet is driven by prophecies of cataclysmic natural disasters, such as global warming, which, in light of an embarrassing cooling trend, has been renamed “climate change.” Are predictions of devastating natural disasters part of an ideological commitment among the ruling elite to create a planetary utopia? Since there is no god but us, they say, we must save ourselves, and the situation is urgent. There is no time for debate. Only power in the hands of the elite—who have understood the truth of human divinity—will save us. Behind the hot air of “climate change science” is the religious myth of pagan Oneism.

Like gas escaping from a tiny crack in the earth's crust before a major volcano spews lava that will consume all in its path, so the sparks of alternate spiritualities hint at a hot flow of religious paganism that threatens to bury our churches and send Christians scurrying to the hills in fear.

The "New" Christianity

"The Lie" arrives in force at a moment when its opponents are severely weakened. Reverend Alan Jones, mentioned above, approvingly cites an apostate Christian who curses the God of the Bible.^{iv} For Jones, belief in the biblical God "has proved exhausting and destructive...[and] *exclusionary*." He can't wait for "a more generous and inclusive version of the Old Story to emerge."^v He believes mystical spirituality will unite the world's religions and its peoples. This **syncretist** cleric's favorite image is the baby Jesus in the lap of the smiling Buddha.

Brian McLaren, a leader of the **Emergent Church Movement**, and author of *Generous Orthodoxy*, says that Alan Jones "is a pioneer in re-imagining a Christian faith that emerges from authentic spirituality. His work stimulates and encourages me deeply." In 2007 Phyllis Tickle, a recognized spokeswoman for the **Emergent Village**, spoke at a public meeting where I asked her, "Does 'spiritual emergence' include all the religions?" Seated next to Brian McLaren, whom she calls the "new Martin Luther," she replied without hesitation: "Yes." In the US, Phyllis Tickle, Brian McLaren and other leaders who profess to be Christians are taking unsuspecting evangelicals into a new flavor of the same paganism about which the apostle Paul warned us. Emergent, progressive "Christianity" is committed to the Oneist unity of all religions.

Interspirituality

Part of the "Great Emergence" is the work of Roman Catholic Brother **Wayne Teasdale**, a lay monk and teacher of "interspirituality," who combined the traditions of Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. He believed that we are at the dawn of a new consciousness, entering the "Interspiritual Age." This movement has been called a new Pentecost, a new work of the Spirit, who is bringing all religions together. Such an interfaith spirit signals the final act in the death of the God of the Bible. It is a spirit thoroughly comfortable with an open display and practice of ancient occult Mysteries. This is not the word "mystery" that Paul speaks of in Ephesians 3:3-4, which really means

^{iv} Please understand that such harsh expressions are not meant to be provocative or offensive. They are offensive, of course! But the student needs to be aware of the hostility that exists against the God of the Bible. Some students will need no reminder, but those who have lived in peaceful countries where the gospel of Jesus Christ has had a marvelous affect may not realize how many forces are turning against the gospel.

^v Alan Jones, *Re-imagining Christianity: Reconnect Your Spirit without Disconnecting Your Mind* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2004), 3, 5.

something God had not yet revealed, but now has revealed. The mysteries that Teasdale advocates are what he calls “direct, immediate, experiential awareness of Ultimate Reality.”

Lively churches that remain faithful to the Scriptures still exist, but Christianity is being erased from the public memory of the West. For instance, the Preamble of the new Constitution for the European Union attributes the formation of Europe to Greco-Roman civilization and the Enlightenment— but *not* to Christianity, whose influence reigned in Europe for sixteen hundred years.

The decline, so obvious in Europe, is now apparent in America. Atheistic secular humanism wore away at Christian belief by lulling Christians into satisfaction with wealth and success, and by its relentless mockery of the supernatural and the miraculous. The secularists succeeded so well that some missions experts no longer consider Christianity to be a predominantly Western religion. But secular humanists were in for a surprise—their time was up, too.

The Defeat of Secular Humanism

The Oneist Lie profited from the knock-out punch that unbelieving postmoderns delivered to atheism, which put its faith in human reason. The god of human reason was the champion of the West for two hundred years but has now left the fight ring in defeat. Modern thinkers had the gall to ask for proof that human reason can solve our problems! But you can't prove by reason that reason is true, because you have to assume reason in order to use it. Of course, all religions begin with faith in certain presuppositions—beliefs that cannot be proven. Rationalism needs as much faith as any religious system, since rationality (human reason) is its last court of appeal. Postmoderns are embarrassed by the **hubris** of secular humanists, who refuse religion and spirituality in the name of reason. Skeptical of all overarching explanations of reality, including rationalism, postmoderns have seen their influence take hold in the Western university system.

General dissatisfaction with the secular worldview has also grown because of the atrocities committed in its name. Two world wars, genocides in Soviet Russia and Communist China, and the pollution caused by irresponsible industrialization have given a bad name to the society created by secular humanism.

The Vacuum of Meaning

Having successfully challenged rationalism, and having denied theism, postmodernism has destroyed the past, yet offers no hope for the future. The vacuum of meaning it created has been an open invitation to spirituality. Since postmodernism doesn't want the doctrinal structures of Christian spirituality, it is turning to pagan spirituality. People are placing their hopes in what has been called the New Spirituality. It is faith in “unreason” not reason, in *mythos* not in *logos*. If reason failed us, perhaps unreason will save us; if logical analysis was not enough, perhaps the ancient myths of spiritual empowerment will lift us to new heights of human achievement. Everyone

thought the late twentieth century would be atheistic and thoroughly secular. But, instead, it has been “sacralized” (made sacred or holy).

The religious table groans under the smorgasbord offerings of the New Spirituality. Some roadside diners in the US advertise: “All you can eat for five dollars!” The New Spirituality offers a huge variety of spiritual “food,” though the price of a consultation with a seer or a hypnotherapist is likely to exceed five dollars! The choice of spiritual sweet meats is endless, and the delicacies of the Perennial Philosophy abound in the marketplace.

Conversions from Secular Humanism

Secularists are converting. Former Marxist, Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic, now wants to “lift the Iron Curtain of the Spirit” by discovering what all the religions have in common. The new sacred canopy is redemptive interfaith. Through this “divine revolution,” we will supposedly save the planet. Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Empire, and a pure product of the atheistic Marxist system, now preaches a form of religious conversion. He calls for a “new synthesis” to incorporate democratic, Christian and Buddhist values in a new version of the Ten Commandments that affirms “the sense of oneness with nature and each other for the future planetary community.”^{vi} The materialist has become a mystic. Be careful, though. For Gorbachev, “democratic” means some form of humanistic Socialism (as in the old East German *Democratic Republic*), and “Christian” means a Christianity re-interpreted through pagan Buddhism. The “new synthesis” is made up of spiritually hungry secular humanists converting to Neopaganism. A pagan philosopher, Richard Tarnas, feels this new synthesis coming on:

The collective psyche seems to be in the grip of a powerful **archetypal** dynamic in which the long-alienated modern mind is breaking through...to rediscover its intimate relationship with nature and the larger cosmos.^{vii}

The modern mind is searching for spiritual Oneism, an occult relationship with nature.

Bolivia: Microcosm of the Global Future?

Before we leave Gorbachev, you should get to know his South American **avatar**, President Evo Morales, who used to be an *atheistic* Marxist and is now a *shamanistic* Marxist, reviving the ancient Bolivian animism of spirit worship and insisting that Andean paganism reflects the true soul of Bolivia. A shadow cabinet of **shamans** helps him decide public policy. One television commentator assured us that Morales will be “energized by the gods” and “all the powers of the cosmos.” The new kid on the block—born to the union of socialism and pagan religion, is forcing Bolivian pastors to think deeply about their situation and their Christian response.

^{vi} Mikhail Gorbachev, “Environment: Act Globally, Not Nationally,” Interview with the *Los Angeles Times* (May 8, 1997).

^{vii} Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind* (New York: Ballantine, 1993), 440.

The Lie has come in full force, now that it is claiming political power. The eventual prize—planetary religious and political power— is enormous, and Oneists are eager to grasp their “pearl of greatest price,” a humanly constructed this-worldly utopia. But, there is a price. If the pagan Lie is to be more than an expression of pro-choice, individualistic, ego-building spirituality (typical of the “New Age Movement”), then the movement must give a coherent account of all human phenomena. It must produce a compelling *worldview* for the twenty-first century planetary community.

Reconstructing: From Marginal Cult to Master Plan

Paganism is now a respected academic discipline. With the publication of the first pagan textbook (Barbara Davy’s *Introduction to Pagan Studies*), paganism took its seat in the university faculty room. Books on paganism are published by university presses at Duke, New York, Pennsylvania, Columbia and Oxford. Graduate work in “metaphysical spirituality” is available at many universities and colleges. The University of Arizona offers its Sophia Project, in a program entitled, “Entity Communications Study” (contacts with non-humans, deceased people, other-worldly beings, Spirit Guides, Angels, Extraterrestrials and a Universal Intelligence). Naropa University in Colorado offers graduate degrees in contemplative education. The University of Santa Monica dispenses a doctorate in Spiritual Psychology. One Lecturer in Religion and Contemporary Society at a British university considers paganism to be the fastest-growing religion of the new century.

In 1997 **June Singer** (a Jungian and a Gnostic) exhorted her fellow pagans to build their own cosmology based on the “joining of the opposites” and on their own choice of gods. She sought a coherent, all-encompassing, attractive and religiously pagan account of the nature of existence. That work is near completion. The late **Thomas Berry**, one of the architects of the rising planetary civilization, called for a new pattern of human presence on the planet, what he called “our great work.”^{viii} This work is to “rediscover the spirituality of the ancient peoples.”

Ecofeminists also hope to build a feminist, nature-and goddess-worshipping “**cosmology**.” After experiencing the ravages of secular humanism, intellectual pagans hope to reconstruct the world with “a new cosmology,” or, as one Unitarian Universalist minister put it, a new “cosmotheology” for “the new universe.”

Postmodern deconstructionists said there is no **metanarrative** (overarching worldview), but religious pagans didn’t seem to hear them and are busy constructing a new one to explain everything. In other words, we are seeing not a breakdown of law and order but a redefinition of it; not unrestrained immoral behavior but a justification of it; not a laxity about sexual perversion but a legalization of it; not a materialistic rejection of God but a spiritual redefinition of God that turns him into the goddess. Intellectual neopagans dismissed the term “New Age” as narcissistic, focusing

^{viii} See Thomas Berry, *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future* (1991).

only on personal bliss and freedom. Today's spiritualists are "progressive" or "integral," eager for a coherent worldview to save the planet. The new systematized paganism includes:

- A powerful spiritual experience, based on the subconscious, that provides an exit from rationalism;
- A resolution of the conflict between science and religion;
- An end to religious strife;
- A compelling analysis of Western philosophy and a critique of rationalism, materialism and consumerism;
- An enchanted, passionate, environmentally-informed view of nature;
- An all-encompassing geopolitical vision of planetary harmony;
- A destruction of the illogical church/state wall of separation and the spiritualization of life in the public square;
- A theory of planetary economics and an all-inclusive, cradle-to-grave, spiritually inspired educational policy;
- A powerful, therapeutic psychology that delivers from anger and greed and proposes an experience of rebirth;
- A liberating redefinition of ethics, namely eco-ethics;
- A radical liberation from narrow heterosexuality into the pleasant paths of **pansexuality**;
- An evolutionary account of history and human significance.

Thousands of progressives in academics, the media and politics, along with liberal church leaders are joining to produce a pagan cosmology to repair our deconstructed world. Such a worldview, proposed as "timeless perennial truth," is full of exuberant, infinite possibilities. People are attracted to the new cosmology not only because it proposes progressive ideas and behavior, but because it explains and justifies them, so that they can be adopted in good conscience. Having absorbed the worldview makeover which appeals to freedom, civil rights and progress, the common response is: "Oh, I get it. Why not? Makes sense to me."

Our Response

All the elements of cultural implosion that we have seen in this lesson are part of the same ideology. "To each his own" is the mantra, but in fact, the Lie is working to destroy Christian influence in the culture. Though they claim that all of us are free to choose a lens in the spiritual kaleidoscope, pagans will not allow Christians the freedom to keep looking at life from a Christian perspective. To save the planet, the new paganism must have total control. "But," you will say, "That Lie has been with us since the beginning." Yes, but our cultural situation has changed.

Once deeply influenced by the Christian faith, our society now faces a relentless takeover by the forces of spiritual apostasy—"for the good of humanity." Our present situation makes it easy for us to read Paul's words in Romans 1. This first-century, bald-headed, bandy-legged, squinty Jewish

Seeing a World of Difference: Lesson 3

rabbi walks onto our twenty-first century stage, looks around slightly bemused, and, to our amazement, speaks powerfully, incisively and precisely to us about our present situation.

His divinely inspired analysis reminds us that there are only two kinds of spirituality. We hear and understand, for we see the cosmic conflict between two deeply opposed worldviews: Oneism and Twoism. To make sense of our time, God has provided divine help from two thousand years ago.