

What's the Difference: New Age Spirituality

1 John 4:1-6

2 Timothy 4:1-4

1. What do you think it means when someone says, "I'm spiritual, but not religious"?
2. Pastor Mark points out that New Age Spirituality combines Eastern Mysticism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Astrology, and Pop Psychology. Why is this combination so attractive to many people?
3. The basis of New Age Spirituality is that we are in a new Astrological age called "The Age of Aquarius" which allows us to experience higher forms of spiritual evolution that will lead us to greater unity, harmony, peace and love. Do you sense that our world is currently headed in that direction? Why or why not?
4. Pastor Mark points out that one of the tenets typically embraced by New Age Spirituality is "God Consciousness." God Consciousness is not just an awareness that God exists, but a realization that we are also Gods. How is this idea different from the Christian view that we are created by God, in the image of God?
5. New Age Spirituality often denies the reality of sin, viewing the concepts of guilt and shame as repressive tools used by authority figures to control others. Once we spiritually evolve, we learn to love ourselves and realize that sin is just an illusion. Do think sin is real or just an illusion?
6. New Age Spirituality views Jesus Christ as one of many spiritually enlightened teachers, in the same category as Buddha, Confucius, Muhammed, Moses, and the Dali Lama. Jesus is not uniquely the son of God, he did not die for our sins. He is just one of many spiritual lights who came to show us a better way. Why do you believe Jesus is more than just a good spiritual teacher?

7. New Age Spirituality encourages us to be open minded about various spiritual truths and experiences. In what way is this helpful for Christians to remember? In what way might this be dangerous?
8. Read 1 John 4:1-6. Why do you think Christians are supposed to “test the spirits?”
9. Pastor Mark tells the story of two bumper stickers. One says, “The mind is like a parachute, it operates best when open.” The other says, “Don’t be so open minded that your brain falls out.” What do you think both bumper stickers are trying to communicate?
10. Read 2 Timothy 4:1-4. What do you think it means that some people will choose to follow false teachers who “tickle itching ears”? How can modern day Christians remain true to the essentials of the Christian Faith during a time when we are encouraged to explore new spiritual ideas in the age of Aquarius?