

# Position Paper

**Holistic Health: See To It That You Are Not Deceived**

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## Holistic Health & Wellness: Biblical Truth or Deception?

### OVERVIEW

Most people that are associated with health and service professions are caring people and simply want to help others achieve quality of life. However, as Christians, we are to discern, evaluate, and test our actions, thoughts, philosophies, and words against the standard of Scripture. When one looks closely at Truth, one will find many disparities in what is taught and promoted as anointing or essential healing oils, alternative medicine or wellness techniques, exercises and programs. One will find a blend of New Age, Eastern, and esoteric religions and spiritual philosophies taught and practiced under the term Christianity.

The Christian ministry of healing is based on solid scriptural and doctrinal foundations both past and present day. God's Word does not change. The gifts of the Spirit, such as healing, demonstrate the good news of the Kingdom of God for every believer. Because of Christ's finished work on the Cross, every believer can have access to healing and it is freely received because of God's love for man.

This is what makes healing as Christ followers different from energy healing such as aromatherapy, essential oils, rain drop technique, reiki, therapeutic touch and other mind/body therapies which are taught as complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) with spiritual benefits. We do not channel impersonal power. That is sorcery. We do not learn how to use impersonal power to balance someone's energy or electrical magnetic forces; and we are not independent agents or practitioners.

We are in a dependent relationship with the one true God- Yahweh! We are not making Him our servant – just the opposite. We are yielding our lives to become His servants. As we come into a relationship with Jesus, the Son of God, and God the Father, through the Holy Spirit, we enter into a stand against the works of the devil. Sickness, disease, pain, demonization, and damnation are destroyed. We work with the Holy Spirit. This is the difference between the theist religion of Christianity and pantheist religions like Buddhism, Hinduism, New Age and New Thought philosophies. Jesus Christ is the Son of God and He is the only way to salvation. Jesus shed His blood for us so that we could have the opportunity for salvation. He is the only Way, the Truth, and the Life for mankind. Anything else is a false worldview. **John 14:6 (NKJV) Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'.**

Everything we do as believers is intended to reinforce and manifest the redemptive work and triumph over the powers of darkness that took place at Calvary. Jesus accomplished it all then and there. When we embrace lies, we empower the liar. Coming into agreement with the devil, we ignore or deny what God has provided and we lose the ability to discern the realms of

the Holy Spirit and often wind up attributing the devil's work to God. The cost of tolerating lies is enormous (Romans 1). Spiritual falsehoods do not just end with the lack of healing; lies rob the heart for more in our relationship with God. We no longer can discern truth and we live within the boundaries of unbelief and with less than God redeemed us to be. The cost of apostasy is spiritual death – separation from God.

### **Galatians 1:8-10 (NKJV)**

*<sup>8</sup> But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. <sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.*

*<sup>10</sup> For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.*

**Discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong, but what is right and almost right. ~ Charles Spurgeon**

## **Do Not Be Deceived**

Satan is the master deceiver. Deception means to know the truth and choose to tell a lie by twisting or perverting the truth – to purposely mislead someone from discovering the truth. Jesus tells us that Satan's efforts will increase dramatically as the end draws near. The sign of the end of the ages is massive deception! Don't be deceived.

### **Matthew 24:4-5 (ESV)**

*<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.*

### **Matthew 24:4-5 (NKJV)**

*<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.*

This warning implies that we have the ability to avoid deception, AND we choose not to be deceived. However, it requires us to pay close attention to the Holy Spirit's choice of words and know what God is saying through His Word. His Word is the standard of all Truth. The point is the time has come that teachers will use the same words or literal words of the Bible and create fables (literal words with fabricated fiction). People are deceived when they assume the meaning of the words are the same as what God has said. The meanings and philosophies behind such words, spiritual experiences, and 'Christian' therapies, are not the Biblical worldview.

**Jesus prayed for us in John 17:17 – 'Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth'.**

**Proverbs 4:20-22: The Word is health unto all your flesh, and life unto them that find it.**

The good news, though, is Jesus is coming back and all truth will forever be revealed to all.

## No Other Gospel. Period!

**Galatians 1:9** Paul writes, ***‘If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you received, let him be accursed’***. This is strong language; however, we see this coming into the churches today. People do not even believe in the Holy Spirit. People are being enticed by and tolerating a perverse gospel of grace, health, and wellness. The Word of God is manipulated and used falsely to fit the desires of the hearts of men. Men and women are being deceived into thinking they are saved and experiencing the Holy Spirit because they believe in Jesus.

It is a travesty that falsehood is embraced but the real tragedy is that people do not know the Word of God to heed the Word of God. Because they are separating themselves from the Holy Spirit, they no longer have discernment as Paul describes in Romans 1. People can no longer discern what is good and what is God. God’s Word is truth – there are no gray areas in God’s Word. God’s Word is pure and produces life. What God says, He means. What we tolerate and judge as Biblical must line up with the standard of the Word of God. Anything that falls short is not God. People are deceived when attempting to overlay Biblical principles and promises onto another worldview philosophy and assume God is in it and is blessing you.

### Concerns with Christians embracing the philosophy of alternative *holistic* resources for healing:

- These products and procedures are marketed as having spiritual benefits that are twisted in the context of Biblical truth and interpretation.
- The authority and inspiration of the Bible is reduced to historical content and the need for other resources is expressed to explain the teaching and principles of healing.
- People are unknowingly partnering with the works of the devil (sorcery) rather than God.
- The source of the healing and miracles are not from God. (Mt. 24:23-24; 2 Peter 2:1-3)
- The message of the Cross is missing in the “healing programs”- yet people are being asked to “come and be anointed”. The message of the Cross is missing from the whole philosophy!
- The teaching materials promote one to learn the art and skill to be a healing practitioner like Jesus rather than becoming sons and daughters with a relationship with God through Jesus.
- Products are marketed in our churches as “Anointing Healing Oils” used in the Bible, therapies are marketed as Christian counseling, Christian alternative therapy, or a Christian practitioner.
- Prayer is promoted as not necessary for healing with oils; however, when used together the use of oils can enhance the effectiveness of prayer.
- Healing and prayer are reduced to impersonal forces or blocked energy channels or a belief system of restoring energy, harmony, and balance.
- The God to which most philosophies are referring, is *not God – Yahweh-* but a God-consciousness – a Universal consciousness of self. Satan disguised as an angel of light.

Test the spirits. Test everything by the Word of God. **1 John 4:1** tells us. ***‘Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world’.*** Search the Word; see Truth. Embrace the Truth – turn quickly away from anything that is only partial truth. Partial truth is still false; partial obedience is still disobedience. Identify the error. Repent, turn away from falsehood and embrace the truth of God’s Word. God stands ready to forgive. He is full of love and mercy.

## **Biblical Healing:**

- The Lord uses us by releasing His power through us. Healing is through the Blood of Jesus. He sacrificed His life for the sins of all mankind so each person could choose to be reconciled unto God. Healing is provided to believers through the atonement of Jesus Christ.
- The Word of God (Bible study and hearing and obeying the voice of God) releases God’s power in our lives.
- Healing is to glorify Jesus Christ and is accompanied through the amazing love of God as the Gospel of salvation (Greek word ‘sozo’ – which means ‘whole’ – healing – spirit, soul, & body).
- Divine healing has been already purchased for us by Jesus and we now have direct access to the throne room of God.
- The healing model is Jesus – He didn’t do anything He didn’t see or hear His Father do. We do the same thing – ‘Listen and do whatever He says’. His Word is Spirit and Life (John 6:63). There are no formulas or special ingredients or programs.
- Prayer is an essential part that connects God’s heart with the actual circumstances of humanity. It is in that place of agreement where the heart of God is with man and contains the ultimate revelation of the will of God in our lives.

## **What is HOLISTIC Health or Complementary Alternative Medicine (CAM)?**

*Complementary or Alternative* medicine is also a huge industry – created because people are seeking alternatives to traditional models of modern medical care and searching for natural remedies and nutrition.

Our concerns relate to making Christians aware that alternative health therapies are not always what they seem to be on the surface. Again, Satan is the ultimate counterfeit; his deception is subtle. It wouldn’t be called deception, if people could see demons. When disguised as an angel of light, many Christians are blindly attracted to him out of their own desires – not God’s

Word. Beware, it is not always the products or the exercises, but how they are packaged and delivered that is troublesome.

### **Concerns of Essential Oils and Other Holistic Healing Practices**

Concerns about using oils or any holistic alternative healing product is the same perspective as taking precautions with any prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) drug. The point here is that each person should take responsibility for your physical health just like one is expected to do for your spiritual health. Research and know what you are taking and why you are taking it. More importantly – know your source of truth! Just because a company, product, exercise regimen, therapy or practitioner promotes themselves as ‘Christian’ means nothing.

**From a spiritual perspective and disciple-making mandate from Jesus**, the concern we have with all holistic healing modalities is that they are packaged in promotion as to be harmless to Christians.

- 1. The promotion holistic healing as teaching as healing in the Bible is misleading and relating the oils, therapies, or practitioner to the ministry of Jesus – is absolutely false.**
  - Yes, plants were used in Egyptian and other ancient cultures. The anointing of oil used by the disciples did not heal when people prayed for the sick – Jesus healed because of who He is. It is through His death, burial, and resurrection for the remission of our sins and to reconcile us back to God – the finished work on Calvary – the atonement is why we receive healing. We lay hands on the sick as disciples, but it is Jesus in us working through us. Not oils or the laying on of the hands. Salvation, healing, deliverance – *sozo*-wholeness- is a gift from God – His Grace that we receive by our faith in Him. Not faith in oils. The oil as referred in James 5:14-15, is symbolic of the Holy Spirit, it does not contain a life force or intelligent healing properties.
  - Some companies are promoting ‘come learn the art of healing like Jesus healed’. Again, Jesus alone went to the Cross – His death was not an ‘art’. Being a disciple of Jesus is not an ‘art’ – it is a relationship with a Person. We don’t seek healing, we seek the Healer! Exercises or techniques using oil and energy are eastern mystic religions with philosophies that require channeling of energy – blending with the teachings of Jesus is an anti-Christ spirituality.
  - The oils are promoted as used in the Bible as used to anoint and heal. The actual teaching from essential oil companies is a spiritual **alternative medicine modality called ‘energy healing’** and is described below. David Steward (2012 – Healing Oils of the Bible) begins with the introduction: *“The healing oils of the Bible are all essential or aromatic. These oils are the vital fluids of plants that are their life blood. They are called ‘essential’ because they are*

necessary for the life of the plant and contain the ‘essence’ of the plant. Essential oils contain life force, intelligence, and vibrational energy that imbues them with healing power that works for people” (Introduction, page xv). **He goes on to say,** “they used aromatic oils for every purpose from maintaining wellness, to physical healing, to enhancement of spiritual states in worship, to emotional cleansing, to purification from sin” (page xvi). **Lastly, still in the introduction, Dr. Steward states:** “Word is vibration, a frequency, a consciousness, an expression of energy. When God created the plants by his speaking voice, he imbued them with his Word and his intelligence. This includes the oils of the plants which he intended, from their very creation, to become our medicines when we need healing. That is what is so special about essential oils. They contain power from God’s Word. Artificial medicines, made by humans, contain no such power. That is why they cannot heal and never will.”... “The point here is that essential oils are divinely ordained as medicines for God’s children and are meant to be used with God’s guidance, accompanied with prayer”(page xvii).

- **Energy healing** modalities will describe a ‘life force’. This life force interpretation and subsequent spiritual experiences people encounter **is not the Holy Spirit**. A counterfeit Holy Spirit is being embraced.
- Scripture is misappropriated and misinterpreted causing people to embrace a particular philosophy’s spirituality as Christianity. People are vulnerable to demonic spirits invading their life because they are actually embracing another gospel – **not the Jesus of the Bible**. *Detail on specific Biblical contradictions cited in the book, ‘Anointing Oils of the Bible’ by Dr. David Steward, can be found in a Position Paper at Zoe Healing Center - [www.zoehealingcenter.com](http://www.zoehealingcenter.com).*

2. **Companies & practitioners promote the oils as anointing oils, laying on of the hands as prayer, impartation, or restoring the body to optimal balance, but are taught as life force energy. People are opening themselves up to deception of the occult.**

**Matthew 24:4-5** ... Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name saying, ‘I am the Christ’, and will deceive many.

**2 Timothy 4:3-4** For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn away from the truth and be turned aside to fables.

**A sign of the end of the ages: Massive deception! Do not be deceived.**

These scriptures imply that we have the ability to avoid deception and we can choose not to be deceived. Fables replace truth. To choose not to be deceived requires us to pay close attention to the Holy Spirit’s choice of words in the Word of God. The point is that the time has come that teachers and leaders will use the same words in the Bible, even Scriptures to create fables,

twisting the Word of God, which is deception people would rather hear than the truth. Don't just read or listen to the words used, find out about their meaning. What do people mean when they use terms like God, life, healing, prosperity, spirit, nature, universe, empowerment, energy, spiritual awareness, personal growth, inner strength, or balance?

**Spirituality Connection? In oils?** Look closely at the description, as well as the names of these examples. Remember, holistic health includes body, mind *and spirit*.

**Forgiveness Essential Oil** – contains an aroma that supports the ability to forgive yourself and others while letting go of negative emotions, an important part of personal growth. Used for emotional support and energy balance.

**Fulfill Your Destiny Essential Oil** – inhale during meditation or goal setting to support spiritual awareness. Diffuse before an important meeting or networking to create a grounded atmosphere.

**Surrender Essential Oil**– provide aromas to help cast off inhibitions that may be controlling your life or limiting your potential. Used for emotional balance.

**3 Wise Men Essential Oil** – designed to promote feelings of reverence and spiritual awareness.

**White Angelica Essential Oil** – use during yoga or meditation to create a positive and comforting atmosphere. You can create a positive atmosphere and inspire feelings of security and optimism no matter what life throws at you.

**Valor Essential Oil** - use for empowerment, confidence, & energy balance.

**Acceptance Essential Oil**– used for acceptance & self-worth; encourages feelings of self-worth.

**Release Essential Oil** – a blend that facilitates the ability to let go anger and frustration. Produces harmony and balance when diffused.

These are actually mocking spirits operating through the philosophy of energy therapy – deceiving the non-discerning Christian to actually entertain them. Tragically, the truth, is that Satan and his demons are being entertained by those who have opened their souls (mind, will, emotions) to them. The theory is that the oils through the olfactory process (smell) produces emotions. Christians have personally reported to us that certain oils bring back memories and they feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Bible tells us to 'test the spirits'! The Holy Spirit has no substitutes. The love of Jesus and the Cross of Calvary are inseparable from the Holy Spirit.

Again, each person must take responsibility for their own health. Knowing the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and you have been purchased by God – you are not your own. We encourage people to go to websites and resources to check out products that are promoted as natural. Natural can mean many things to different people. From a healthcare professional, the word 'natural' from a pure sense, connotes going back to the very basics: fresh air, sunlight, fresh water, healthy food, exercise, and quality sleep. If *natural* is being promoted subtly as 'holistic' there is a spiritual component attached.



## What Is Energy Healing?

Complementary Alternative Medicine (CAM), also called Natural Alternative & Complementary (NAC) therapies and holistic practices are prominent modalities that have appeared in the West. The American health system had primarily been dominated by a biomedical worldview. There has been a paradigm shift that has reconceptualized health and healing to be holistic – body, mind & spirit.

The concept of energy healing and its use as a philosophy for promoting holistic healing is not new. Energy therapies are ancient healing practices in which the systems are rooted in the belief that the body, mind, spirit, and emotions form a complex dynamic energy field that can be manipulated to promote holistic healing (Popoola, M. 2015, pg. 39). **The ultimate goal of CAM, is not to promote healing, but to induce or maintain a state of balance, harmony, and wholeness (body, mind, & spirit).** Therefore, the understanding of the concepts of energy and holism are critical to understanding the holistic healing process and the management of stress-related diseases when these therapies are practiced. (Popoola, 2015, pg. 39).

Holistic health is described from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) as one who considers the whole person, including physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects. Other concepts associated with holistic health by such organizations are energy, mind/body balance, spirit connection, physical wellness, emotional wellness, self-healing, traditional healing, and cultural healing. (Popoola, M. 2015 pg.40). Unlike modern medical approaches which are mechanical and fragmented in clinical care, holism is humanistic and always considers the environment, the culture, and the interconnections between other forms of life and energy on Earth (Popoola, pg. 41).

**As you can imagine – with these concepts and descriptions, holistic health opens itself to a world of many belief systems, conceptual frameworks, and religious traditions.**

The NCCIH categorizes healing into categories: Natural; Mind-Body; or Traditional Healers. Natural reflect products such as herbs, vitamins, minerals as dietary supplements. The Mind-Body healing constitutes such things as yoga, meditation, massage therapy, acupuncture, tai-chi, qi-gong, healing touch, hypnotherapy & reflexology. Other places you may see prayer included in this category. Traditional healing include Ayurvedic medicine, Traditional Chinese medicine, homeopathy, & naturopathy. In all of these except the natural dietary supplements, there is a *spiritual component, many of which are called energy healing.*

As you can see from the description of essential oils as defined from ‘The Oils Used in the Bible’ and the actual oil descriptions and uses from the previous example, a spirituality or spiritual philosophy is inseparable and becomes much more than just a herb or dietary supplement. Essential oils and therapies actually fit into holistic healing in the mind/body category. Every energy therapy has an underlying philosophy interpreted to mean supernatural wisdom or spiritual consciousness that comes from God or Higher Self, packaged to the West in the form of health, wellness, or exercise. There are essential oil companies that are not just about

promoting oils as a fragrance, beauty, or household product, it is about energy healing with Jesus portrayed in the spiritual philosophy and relating the experiences as the Holy Spirit. The God consciousness, these philosophies are really promoting, is a universal spiritually guided life force.

**The Cross is missing!** The Blood of Jesus is missing! The love and intimacy of the Father is missing! In Christian healing, the focus is on Christ, the Cross, forgiveness of sins. The Gospel puts the focus of the ministry of Jesus as forgiveness of sins through His Cross.

People using these therapies with no understanding of truth are blindly following their leader or practitioner to select and promote a treatment plan for your condition. When using modalities that are intended for holistic healing, you are embracing the spirituality component behind the practice because it is intended to be inseparable. These health and wellness initiatives and practices have caused vulnerable people to open the doors to the occult. The spiritual experiences many claim to have is not the Holy Spirit.

**The reasons these trends of holism are accepted in the U.S.** are because:

- Marketing implies that Reiki, Essential Oils, Therapeutic Touch and others are the same way Jesus healed.
- They satisfy the hunger for spirituality and transcendence.
- There are problems with allopathic (modern medicine) and people are seeking perceived improvements or alternatives.
- People desire more personal connections with their practitioner.
- People believe it is not God's will to heal everyone.

**Healing Touch** includes therapies like, Therapeutic Touch (TT), Reiki, shiatzu, reflexology, raindrop technique. Christian laying on of the hands for prayer is often lumped into this spiritual healing category – beware- it is assimilated into all cultures with no reference to – or belief in Calvary and the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

**Therapeutic touch (TT)** is often considered the modern form of the ancient practice of laying on hands but it is done indirectly without touching, but moving your hand over the body. TT, for example, is not considered a religion, but the practice has roots in ancient shamanism. Research these various religions and practices and you will see and quickly understand the commonalities. Even Yoga- **Yoga** is a mind and body practice with origins in ancient Indian philosophy. Like other meditative movement practices, it has a distinct spiritual energy philosophy along with posture, mantras, and a spirit!

There are many variations to 'touch therapies' and 'wellness movements' but the humanistic basic principle is to stimulate or change the energy channel of the body and help restore or

maintain balance. What is disturbing about the ‘healing power’ in these energy practices, is that the power is the same life force behind occult practices that God abhors. The practice of Reiki – actually uses mediums – one must be ‘attuned’ or have energy channeled from a ‘Master’ Reiki practitioner.

**Hypnosis** is a practice that puts a person in a state of sleep – process of marked susceptibility to suggestion and considerable loss of will power and sensations. How frightening for a believer to intentionally surrender his will power to another person. Or for person (hypnotherapist) to manipulate the thoughts of another human whom God created. Hypnotics are a class of drugs that produce sleep.

**Reflexology**, also called zone therapy, or compression massage, or even acupuncture, is described as a holistic therapy aiming to benefit the body, mind, emotions and spirit (Christian Medical Fellowship, 2012). Reflexology is based on Taoism, an Eastern Religion philosophy in which there are ‘energy channels’ or meridians or ‘chi’ or ‘qi’ that carry the free flow of ‘life energy’ necessary for healing, good health, and balance. These channels become obstructed by disease.

Reflexology is presented to the public as a method of relieving one’s stress, pain, and restoring health. That sounds great, but the problem is the philosophy and techniques are ancient occult practices. Satan also has power, heals, and does miracles. Just because something was beneficial, doesn’t mean God is in it. The same with Yoga – an ancient Hindu occult religion, but packaged as exercise only. Holistic health involves mind, body, and spirit. What spirit? Just like the love of Jesus and the Holy Spirit are inseparable so is the counterfeit spirit behind a spiritual holistic health practice.

**Matthew 7:21-23** tells us: *‘Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.’*

Yet, those that practice all of these things have no difficulty ascribing the power to Jesus. The repackaging of false religions and ancient practices are intentional for Western audiences. The Bible is full of Scriptures with God’s prohibition against trafficking in the spirit realm or using mediums. In all of these practices, we seem to have practitioners that profess to be Christ followers. Again, know what you are doing – guard your spiritual health – guard your relationship with Jesus! Know your source and origin of your practices. You choose whether or not to be deceived.

### **Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 18-20**

*“When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. <sup>10</sup> 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 <sup>11</sup> or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, <sup>12</sup> for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. <sup>13</sup> You shall be blameless before the LORD your God, <sup>14</sup> for these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do this.*

*<sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. <sup>19</sup> And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.*

**In Christian healing**, the focus is on Christ, the Cross, Christ’s death and resurrection, and the fullness of walking in the Holy Spirit as we follow Jesus and His ways. The claims to practice essential oils or any other holistic or humanistic practice related to Jesus is absolutely false.

**John 14:6** *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

**Mark 2:4-12** *<sup>4</sup> And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” <sup>6</sup> Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, <sup>7</sup> “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” <sup>8</sup> And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in your hearts? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? <sup>10</sup> But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— <sup>11</sup> “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.” <sup>12</sup> And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”*

### **James 5:15-16**

*<sup>15</sup> And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*

Instead of condemning or accusing practitioners or participants – invite them to join you in becoming a disciple of Jesus. Begin to really minister to them the real Jesus, encouraging them to make Jesus Lord of their lives, and loving them as Jesus did. Avoid seeing people as evil, but a person with a different worldview. However, it is important for you to speak truth.

The bottom line – anything outside of Jesus is humanism or perversion of Jesus is not God. Any stronghold is idolatry. God wants to be the center of truth in your life. God is jealous! Anytime God says one thing and I believe what the enemy says, I place Satan in the center of truth in my

life. Anytime we believe lies, we place our security in other things. Essentially, we are saying to God, “I will take it from here!” Many things we cannot control. However, we choose, ‘who is my source?’. We have freedom to change sources at any time.

### **Occult Involvement**

Occult involvement is forbidden by the Lord (Deuteronomy 18:9-14). Satan will offer counterfeit access to the spiritual realm. His points of access are seducing and most enter naively because people have no knowledge of the practices in which they enter or no knowledge of God’s Word. Satan is subtle in “it’s just a game” – ouija boards, Pokémon, horoscopes, carnival fortune tellers, mediums, magic. “Oh it’s just harmless fun or an alternative therapy, right”? Or “it’s just a movie”; “it’s just pretend or make believe”. How many times do you hear rationalization or justification to what the Holy Spirit is speaking to you to question, to judge? Be aware of the Holy Spirit nudging or creating ‘something unsettling in your spirit’. He is the greatest Teacher if we allow Him to teach and counsel the whole word of God.

Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you what you need to know related specifically to occult exposure in your own life. God is speaking – ask Him, He will show you changes you will need to make for your own life. There are many occult practices. There is hidden spirituality behind many alternative health practices for healing and wellness. Any secret societies or associations (Free Masons), satanic practices (Dungeons & Dragons), false religions, secret initiations, oaths. Any ceremony or covenant required by any other source is also a red flag. We are to receive guidance only from the Word of God.

### **RECEIVE FREEDOM**

Receive freedom by first acknowledging it – then REPENT. You will not fulfill your destiny until you are delivered. Free people free people.

1. Repent – turn away from it.
2. Renounce any previous or current involvement.
3. Ask Jesus to forgive you for engaging in the activity and to take His place as Lord of your life.
4. Command any anti-Christ spirits ‘to go!’ in Jesus’ name.
4. Ask Jesus to fill you up with the Holy Spirit and receive Him.

An example of this in the New Testament is Paul’s letter to the Colossians. Paul had heard about the heresy occurring from the syncretism or blending of Christianity with Greek philosophy, Jewish legalism, and mysticism. Paul wrote to the Colossians to expose and rebut the heresy; to instruct them in the truth and warn them of the dangers of returning to pagan vices; and to encourage them in the full sufficiency of Christ alone. Paul lifts up Christ as the center and circumference of all that exists. The Lordship of Christ and the fullness of His deity in the life of believers is the most crucial and clearest evidence of the Holy Spirit’s presence.

**Colossians 2:8-10 NKJV** *'Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9) For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10) and you are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power.'*

## **What Do We Do?**

We repent, turn from sin and unbelief, and turn back to God. Examine your heart – what is the last thing God told you to do – are you doing it? Examine your spiritual foundation – Is Jesus really Lord in your life? Have you been baptized in water? Baptized in the Holy Spirit? If so, then the Bible tells us to put on the full armor of God so that we may be able to stand against the devil– to stand firm, praying continually in the Spirit (*Ephesians 6*). *Matthew 6:33* tells us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. *Philippians* tells us not to be anxious for anything but rejoice with thanksgiving, make our requests before God and He will provide all of our needs. We can trust God to take care of those who are His!

We also know that this is an awesome age of opportunity to share God's grace and plan of redemption with others. People are desperate for hope; we can introduce them to Jesus so that each can find LIFE!

### **Ephesians 6:10-18**

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, <sup>18</sup> praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...*

### **Matthew 6:33**

*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

### **Philippians 4:4-9; 19-20**

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. <sup>19</sup> And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

### **Matthew 28:16-20**

*Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

## **Conclusion: Guarding the Gospel with Discernment**

**The greatest attack** on the church today is the *exclusivity and purity of the Gospel*. Exclusivity declares that all other faiths and worldview philosophies are false because no one can come to God except through the atoning death of Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). The exclusivity of the gospel also produces humility and repentance because there is no room for self-righteousness or pride.

**Equally tragic** is the willingness of a born-again Christian to tolerate, put up with, or accept another gospel. People are willing to compromise for the sake of offending someone or wanting to fit in with people around them. People want pain eliminated at all costs, even if it includes compromise to grasp at anything that promises hope, healing, and wellness. People are also not aware of their responsibility as a Christian, to judge and test ALL things. Paul commended the Bereans for rightfully testing and examining his teachings (Acts 17:10-11).

Spiritual discernment is a discipline and a privilege that only born-again Christians can exercise. **1 Corinthians 2:13-16** *'But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things.'*

**Another responsibility** of a believer walking in the Holy Spirit, is to challenge professing Christians in their unfruitful lives or deception due to their alignment with the world. Those that are deceived will not know it unless someone lovingly confronts them with the truth.

**WE, Zoe Healing Center, take these responsibilities seriously** as we disciple and equip those that choose to follow Jesus. Subsequently, we have written position papers related to deception. Each of our ministries, and each leader and general volunteer are required to be trained on our foundational truths, as well as the specific ways we guard the exclusivity and the purity and the integrity of the gospel at all costs. Because our motives are pure and in the spirit of love, people are encouraged to love the truth and hate what is false and leading people astray (*Psalms 119:104*). We challenge each person to examine their faith in the light of God's standard, His Word.



**Matthew 7:13-14** *‘Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14) Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

God cares about the truth of our well-being – He is Truth! God created us; redeemed, restored, & sustains us. No assumptions or theories here – we are His workmanship! God wants us well! He fearfully and wonderfully designed us to be well and fruitful.

**Ephesians 2:4-10** *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5) even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – 6) and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7) so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9) not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

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