

"Are you in awe of what you are doing, offering the essence of what God has created? You should be. Young Living offers little bottles of God; I'm a believer!"

New Thought leader Wayne Dyer at Young Living's 2013 "Believe" Conference

AROMATHERAPY: Biblical Path to Healing or Demonic Deception?

By Chuck and Julie Cohen

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Flowers, herbs, trees, babbling brooks, fresh air.....the Lord has been gracious to us on this sinful planet. Despite all the evil in the world, the Lord has left us with beauty to enjoy. Every time one of my little boys brings me a dandelion and says "Here mommy, I picked this for you" I am reminded of the Master Creator who was so gracious as to put a beautiful yellow flower on a weed.....a weed! So, what could be wrong with using an essential oil, a substance that comes from a plants; a part of nature the Lord put here on earth for our enjoyment and even our healing?

This is where our discussion begins. First, we would like to establish an important premise – that is, suffering is a result of sin in a fallen world, and is not an eternal virtue. God uses suffering to refine and purify us, but on its own it is not a blessing. Our hearts go out to those who suffer day in and day out, crying out to God for relief. Christ at one level appealed to God to let the cup of suffering pass by him, and Paul prayed three times for God to remove the thorn in his flesh. We want healing from our physical maladies. It is part of the nature God has given us to want bliss – that is the essence of Heaven, which is to live in worshipful communion with God without suffering. So we understand the need to find remedies to provide relief – in some cases it becomes a moral obligation if life is at stake. And especially when there is even partial success in the techniques we use, it seems almost wrong to question it. For if it works, don't mess with it. So, we know it is a desire of the human heart, and perhaps necessary, to seek healing. But as Christians, we are called to discern, evaluate, and test our actions, thoughts and words against the standard of Scripture. Pragmatism is not an option for the Christian. God at His judgment throne will not accept the empiricistic answer: "What I did was practical and produced results, if it was wrong, I wouldn't have felt better afterward, I didn't agree with the reason it worked – it just worked." We, as Christians, should ask God for healing, we should ask others to pray for us and be willing to pray for others who suffer. But, we have an obligation as Christians to seek healing in a way that is prescriptive (e.g. prayer) and descriptive (e.g. medicinal), and not prohibitive, such as in violation to Scripture.

Before we move into the discussion on this topic, it is important to define what aromatherapy is and what it is not. According to the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy, the term, also referred to as Essential Oil therapy, can be defined as the art and science of utilizing naturally extracted aromatic essences from plants to balance, harmonize and promote the health of body, mind and spirit. It seeks to unify physiological, psychological and spiritual processes to enhance an individual's innate healing process. (<http://www.naha.org/explore-aromatherapy/about-aromatherapy/what-is-aromatherapy>). The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine defines it as "the use of essential oils from plants (flowers, herbs, or trees) as a complementary health approach." What we do not mean, for the purpose of this paper, is the household and ordinary use of essential oils in such things as household cleaners, perfumes, and massage oils.

Our critique focuses on whether it is acceptable within a Christian worldview/theology to practice aromatherapy for physical, emotional and spiritual healing. The majority of our research has focused on the Young Living brand of essential oils primarily because of the abundance of literature available. In addition, YL is quite popular among the Christian homeschool community. In fact, some recommend only using YL because other "lower quality oils may be toxic."

(<http://yoursacredcalling.com/blog/2014/02/awakening-love-with-essential-oils-2/> see bottom of post).

However, any essential oil company that touts the same philosophical and ideological claims falls under the same critique. We have also read many reputable folks outside of the Young Living Company in the larger aromatherapy community. Those experts include Robert Tisserand, Kurt Schnaubelt, Valerie Ann Worwood, Louise Hay and others.

We will make the argument that aromatherapy, and specifically the Young Living company, has philosophical and theological problems for the Christian. We will demonstrate how vitalism, Hindu Chakras (energy centers), psychic abilities, vibrational/energetic medicine, metaphysical intent, which are antithetical to the Christian faith, but are foundational to the philosophy and practice of aromatherapy. In addition, we will outline how Young Living and his associate, David Stewart, believes and promotes a New Thought philosophy which is at the heart of neo-paganism. YL and other producers of aromatherapeutic oils attempt to have an air of scientific authority by having a "research team." However, these doctors are easily exposed as to what their mission is through their New Age/New Thought, and metaphysical writings and heretical exegesis of Scripture. Our goal is to point out to our brothers and sisters that those who practice aromatherapy, or use and sell the Young Living or similar products are unknowingly promoting witchcraft and could even be practicing it. We trust that you, as the reader, will consider the information we present in a careful manner and with prayer and Scriptural counsel.

The Philosophical Problems

VITALISM

One of the dangers associated with aromatherapy is the philosophy of vitalism. Vitalism is at the heart of almost all alternative healing modalities. Vitalism is the belief that a soul or spirit exists in every living thing. It is also known as the vital force, vital principle, or the life force. This force is seen as an energy that can be directed and balanced to accomplish healing. Jon Carlson the founder of the Vitalist School of Herbology writes on his website that:

“The vital force exists in all living things as an innate non-material, intelligent presence that directs and informs the organism on all levels. Similar to chi in Chinese Medicine or prana in Ayurveda, the vital force serves as a defense against disease and is frequently suggestive of a channel that is connecting us with the Divine. Vitalism recognizes the relationship of the healthy spirit to the healthy body and Vitalist practitioners strive to treat on all levels: mind, body, and spirit. When the vital force becomes depleted or goes out of balance, we become vulnerable to disease. Maintaining the vital force is the focus of Vitalist treatment, with an emphasis on healthy lifestyle practices in combination with gentle, non-invasive therapies.”

In the book, “Kingdom of the Occult” by Walter Martin, the statement is made that:

“Prana, polarity, chi – there are many names for occult energy, but generally it relates to the creative life force within human beings and/or outside of them. This energy is the power that surrounds and feeds mankind, and it is fed in return by mankind; it is a power that can be controlled by human beings through various means. This is the power worshipped by the kingdom of the occult. God has revealed that this power source does not originate with Him, and that leaves only one other source: the prince of darkness – the devil.”

Vitalism/the life force does not fit within a Christian worldview. We as human beings alone have been imbued by God with a spirit/soul and He alone has given us life and continues to give us breath. He alone guides our steps and our lives within his sovereignty and his natural laws. We are not directed by an energy or a force but by a benevolent God who has given us His Holy Spirit. God is in control. He sustains us by His power, we cannot manipulate this power. God is God alone. We do not have power that we can appeal to and have control over and neither do plants or herbs. When we think we can manipulate a spiritual power, force or energy we become sorcerers.

Unfortunately, vitalism today is alive and well. As our society has forsaken Christianity, monotheism and the sovereignty of God, is it any wonder that vitalism has made a comeback? It is thriving and one of the ways it is thriving is in the healing philosophy of most essential oil companies. Marlene M. Mitchell a certified aromatherapy teacher, whose school is approved by The National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy and The Alliance of International Aromatherapists, has this to say about essential oils:

“Unlike synthetic substances, which have no vital force contained in them, essential oils are filled with living, pulsating vibrations.”

(http://healing.about.com/od/aromatherapy/a/aroma_colors.htm)

The next quote is from the Gale Encyclopedia of Occultism & Parapsychology:

“The philosophy behind aromatherapy is connected to the Gaia Hypothesis, which conceptualizes the earth as a living organism, seeing plants and animals together as inextricable parts of that organism. In Aromatherapy Workbook, Marcel Lavabre writes, “Essential oils are the ‘quintessence’ of the alchemists. In this sense, they condense the spiritual and vital forces of the plants in material form. Therefore, they (oils) act on the biological level to strengthen the natural defenses of the body, and are the media of a direct human-plant communication on the energetic and spiritual plane.” Aromatherapy postulates subtle energies of aromatic plants related to life force, which can be correlated with ancient Chinese concepts of Yin and Yang.”

The above statement sounds a lot like the song “Colors of the Wind” from Disney’s Pocahontas:

But I know every rock and tree and creature
Has a life, has a spirit, has a name.

Examples of vitalism are obvious in materials promoted by and distributed by Young Living. Following are two quotes from Gary Young the founder of Young Living from his book, *Aromatherapy: The Essential Beginning*.

“I have found that the **intent** of the individual receiving and applying the therapy is helpful. The essential oils, because they are derived from plants and are the very **life force** of the plant, carry an **intelligence** and a **frequency**. When you combine the electrical frequency and the intelligence of both the body and oil, a greater healing process begins. (p. 75) (emphasis added)

“If you take the blood out of the body, you have a corpse. If you take the oil out of the plant, you have only fiber devoid of its **healing life force**.” (p. 104) (emphasis added)

David Stewart writes for Young Living. Stewart is considered a scientific, Christian supporter of YL products through a variety of books, articles, and interviews. He also runs the website, raindropttraining.com, which promotes and certifies those that want to legally practice the Raindrop Technique. Raindrop Technique is promoted and can only be legally practiced as a spiritual healing tool endorsed by the Spiritual Healers Licensing Board. (For more on Raindrop technique please see the Appendix)

In a radio interview, David Stewart referred to YL as “our company.”

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAaWzx7uRss>) Here is a quote from Stewart in his book, *Healing Oils of the Bible*.

From the first page of the introduction:

“Essential oils contain life force, intelligence, and vibrational energy that imbues [*sic*] them with healing power that works for people.”

On the next page of the introduction, referring to people in Biblical times:

“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**. The medicines manufactured today by man cannot compare with the healing capabilities of essential oils. Modern pharmaceuticals lack the **life force**, **the intelligence** and the **vibrational energy** found in healing oils.” (emphasis added)

In the YL video Seed to Seal on their website (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toCDNZ4W5_M) , you will hear the following (starting at 00:09):

“The Earth offers its **living energy** to those fortunate enough to hear its voice; to those who share its frequency. A gifted few take it upon themselves to become the purveyors of Earth’s natural bounties. Gary Young and those with Young Living carry on the ancient traditions that protect the **living energy** of essential oils.” (emphasis added)

In the same video, the narrator describes the distillation process of essential oils in this way (at 03:55):

“This is **a life giving substance** and if not treated properly you do not get all those elements that give it life. **Essential oils offer passage to peace**, but the essence of such comforts, come from the purity of the oils that bestow these gifts.”

The term “living energy” is often mentioned in the Seed to Seal video and also in the YL materials. This may seem like an innocent phrase until one understands that it refers to a vitalistic philosophy.

Both New Thought and New Age philosophies, distinct from Vitalism, are at the core of Young Living. It is these philosophies that drive the healing of the plants, according to the majority of literature from Gary Young and those affiliated with him, and not science.

NEW AGE

The New Age movement is a Western spiritual movement that developed in the second half of the 20th century. Its central precepts have been described as "drawing on both Eastern and Western spiritual and metaphysical traditions and infusing them with influences from self-help and motivational psychology, holistic health, parapsychology, consciousness research and quantum physics". (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Age)

Former astrologer, now Christian Apologist, Marcia Montenegro presents the following in her article "The New Age: What is it?" (http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_NewAge.html)

The New Age borrows from and synthesizes many views:

Humanism - Man is inherently good.

Relativism - There is no absolute reality or moral standard.

Subjectivism - There is no absolute, objective external truth. Truth is based on personal experience and perception.

Pluralism - All spiritual beliefs are equally valid.

Adaptations of Eastern Religions:

Hinduism - All is one; one is all (monism). God is an impersonal force, part of the universe, and/or beyond knowing. Material reality is an illusion and is inferior to spiritual reality.

Reincarnation: the soul returns to another body after death. Spiritual growth is the constant process of evolving.

Buddhism - Suffering is caused by desire. Detachment from desire is practiced to end suffering.

The self/identity does not exist. Spiritual insight is gained through meditation techniques such as centering and mindfulness.

Taoism - One reality, the Tao, is split in opposite forces. These opposite forces are yin and yang. There is a life force, chi (or qi; ki). Health and spiritual growth come from balancing the chi (basis for most alternative healing).

Postmodernism - Man is good; there is no objective truth; there are no absolutes and no authority.

Occultism and Paganism - The earth/nature is exalted as the source and sustainer of life. There is one divine force or life force linking people, nature and the universe. Access to and manipulation of this force is possible. Divination techniques such as astrology, numerology, spell casting, tarot cards, and psychic techniques are usually practiced. Rituals are performed according to seasons and moon phases in the belief that this harmonizes one with nature.

Problems with Young Living's Philosophy

"For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve." 2 Cor 11:13-15 (NIV)

There are many problematic statements made by Gary Young and CARE founder, David Stewart. In addition to vitalism and New Age thinking, these men and others advance a relatively new philosophy known as New Thought. We will take some time to explore this concept, as this is the peanut butter that holds the sandwich together between eastern thought and Christianity. Put another way it acts as the sugar for the Christian who unknowingly swallows the poison.

DEFINING OUR TERMS

Before we can explore the problems with Young Living, the terms “intent,” “aura,” Law of Attraction, and “chakras” need to be explained.

Intent: When this word is used in Young Living materials it does not use the common definition of determination, fixed attention or resolve. Rather intention is seen as a force or energy that one can manipulate to reach a desired end. It is very much like psychic ability. For example, Young Living guest speaker Wayne Dyer defines intent in his book, *The Power of Intention*. He quotes self-proclaimed shaman, Carlos Castaneda:

“Intent is a force that exists in the universe. When sorcerers (those who live of the Source) beckon intent, it comes to them and sets up the path for attainment, which means that sorcerers always accomplish what they set out to do.” (p. 4)

Wayne Dyer adds;

“Activating intention means rejoining your Source and becoming a modern day sorcerer.” (p. 8)

According to Dyer, “Intention is not something you do, but rather a force that exists in the universe as an invisible field of energy!” He continues, “the Source, which is intention, is pure, unbounded energy vibrating so fast that it defies measurement and observation. It’s invisible without form or boundaries. So, at our Source, we are formless energy, and in that formless vibrating spiritual field of energy, intention resides.” (p. 7)

Aura: Believed to be a psychic energy or field of light surrounding and emanating from a person's body and all living things. Auras may manifest in different colors, as seen by clairvoyants, and those colors are interpreted as indicating a feeling, experience, state of health, or quality possessed by the owner. Reading or scanning a person's aura is used in some alternative healing work. (Definition is from www.christiananswersforthenewage.org).

Law of attraction: Is a New Thought Principle. The definition is taken from Wikipedia:

“The law of attraction is the name given to the belief that "like attracts like" and that by focusing on positive or negative thoughts, one can bring about positive or negative results. This belief is based upon the idea that people and their thoughts are both made from "pure energy", and the belief that like energy attracts like energy. One example used by a proponent of the law of

attraction is that if a person opened an envelope expecting to see a bill, then the law of attraction would "confirm" those thoughts and contain a bill when opened. A person who decided to instead expect a cheque might, under the same law, find a cheque instead of a bill."

Chakra: Definition of chakra from Wikipedia:

"Chakras, in Hindu metaphysical tradition and other belief systems, are centers of Prāṇa, life force, or vital energy. Chakras correspond to vital points in the physical body i.e. major plexuses of arteries, veins and nerves. Texts and teachings present different numbers of chakras."

Chakras are not Christian but are an essential part of the Hindu religion. Montenegro defines it this way:

"Chakra - a Sanskrit word meaning 'wheel' used in Hindu beliefs and practices, such as yoga, to describe what are believed to be the five, six, or seven (depending on the teaching) psychic and spiritual centers of man. The chakras are invisible, and are believed to start at the base of the spine and end in the middle of the forehead. The top of the head is the culmination point for an energy called kundalini which rises through the chakras to the crown of the head through certain meditation and tantric practices. (Some sources which include the crown area state there are seven chakras). A different color is often associated with each chakra, usually red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo/purple, and white for the crown. The kundalini is believed to be a form of divine energy, coiled at the base of the spine like a serpent which can rise through a channel, called the Sushumna, up the chakras, thus bringing a spiritual awakening. It is taught that arousing the kundalini up through the chakras can be dangerous and should be done under the supervision of a teacher or guru. It is also taught that awakening the kundalini may uncover certain psychic powers called Siddhis. Buddhism, Hinduism, and Western views may differ in their teachings on the chakras. Chakras may be equated by mystics and occultists with the spheres from the Kabbalah's Tree of Life. Chakras are often referred to in some New Age meditation practices and philosophies, and in some forms of energy healing, such as Therapeutic Touch. Alternative healing often assumes the existence of chakras and connects ill health to blockages in the chakras."

You will often see chakras referred to in alternative "medical" literature as "energy centers" or "centers." The man to first use the term "centers" instead of "chakras" was Hindu, Paramahansa Yogananda. He was one of the first Hindu "missionaries" to the USA, first speaking at the International Congress of Religious Liberals on October 6th 1920. He purposely used a minimum of Hindu terminology as to not threaten the Christian sensibilities of the West. He was also known for using, or rather twisting, Scripture to appeal to his audience as well as appealing to "science." His methods were successful and continue to be the most common tactic used to deceive Christians into thinking that many pagan/New Age healing practices are benign. Yogananda also promoted the idea that all religions are one. A 2008 Pew Research Survey found that 70 percent of Americans and 57 percent of Evangelical Christians believe that "many religions can lead to eternal life". (American Veda, Goldberg, P.113)

NEW THOUGHT

New Thought, sometimes known as Higher Thought, promotes the ideas that Infinite Intelligence, or God, is everywhere, spirit is the totality of real things, true human selfhood is divine, divine thought is a force for good, sickness originates in the mind, and "right thinking" has a healing effect.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Thought)

According to Philip Goldberg in his book, *American Veda: How Indian Spirituality Changed the West*, New Thought began in New England, in the late 19th century, around the time of the American Civil War. Those who were dissatisfied with Christianity began to study "alternative wisdom sources." The movement's single biggest influence was Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was the first public thinker to embrace Eastern religion. The new religious philosophy was also influenced by the metaphysics/spiritualism of Emanuel Swedenborg, and Franz Mesmer. Due to the original goals of New Thought which was to provide physical healing, New Thought was also referred to as Mind Cure. In 1902, William James labeled it the "religion of healthy mindedness."

Goldberg explains that New Thought's view of God differs from that of Christianity in that God is more of an energetic force than a person. Contemporary proponents of New Thought would include Dale Carnegie, Norman Vincent Peale, and New Age celebrities Wayne Dyer (quoted at the beginning of this paper), and Rhonda Byrne, author of the best seller, *The Secret*. Byrne's take on New Thought is that you control your life through your thoughts or you reap what you think. The philosophy is also referred to as "the law of attraction." According to Goldberg, pastors that share Byrne's worldview would include Robert H. Schuller and Joel Olsteen.

One of the problems with New Thought is that it synthesizes Christian concepts with Eastern philosophy. For example, we can achieve the success we want if we think rightly. On the surface, it sounds holy and biblical, but it is full of imaginations that set themselves against the knowledge of God. In the process, the philosophy usurps the ailing Christian who desires to find a remedy from their illness, and dupes them into believing that Aromatherapy and other modalities are acceptable and valid.

The below information is from the website <http://christiananswersforthenewage.org>, written by Marcia Montenegro. The information is taken from her 6 part article *New Thought Making Straight Ways Crooked; A Warning for Christians*:

New Thought uses the label Christian but denies all the essentials of the historic Christian faith...

Syncretism between Christianity and early New Thought was a hallmark of this movement. The biblical teaching that salvation and redemption of sins comes through faith in Christ was rejected, replaced with the view that union with what was called Divine Mind would bring health and happiness...

Man's problem was not sin, but rather incorrect thinking about his nature; the Bible was interpreted allegorically through the filter of New Thought; and salvation was not

related to redemption through faith in Christ, but rather was a matter of birthing a new thought or consciousness to provoke awareness of one's innate divine nature. A basic tenet of New Thought is that man is God or a part of God, and achieves a state of "Christ consciousness" when aware of this divine nature. "Christ Consciousness," or "God Consciousness," is a term pervasive in the New Age movement, which absorbed some New Thought beliefs, and refers to the realization of one's divine or Christ nature...

In New Thought, despite the biblical language:

God is not the personal God of the Bible

Jesus is not the unique Son of God (he may be called God's son but only in the sense that we are all God's children)

Jesus is not the second person of the Trinity, but rather a man who realized his divine nature

Prayer is not petitioning God, but rather affirming what we want

Sin is simply incorrect thinking

Man is not separate from God, but rather possesses a divine nature

The Bible is read as an esoteric code book to uncover hidden spiritual laws

Illness is illusory or a crude projection of erroneous thoughts

Salvation is achieving right thinking through realization of one's divine "Self" and one's ability to create or alter reality with thought

New Thought is directly relevant to the Young Living Company because the idea creates a false premise that the healing we achieve and its philosophical connection is interchangeable with the Christian worldview. Accordingly, the broader scope of aromatherapy should be understood as compatible with biblical Christianity. This is the deadly poison – for once this idea is accepted, it is then just a small step toward adopting other dangerous medical practices, or other paths that lead further into the occult. Again, one of the goals of New Thought is to provide physical healing. The relief-seeking Christian will accept the Christian-sounding jargon, buy the product, perhaps will “feel” better, and be less likely to question another equally dangerous remedy that will pull him further away from the Truth and draw him closer to the mouth of the deadly lion (1 Pet 5:8).

GARY YOUNG

Gary Young believes psychic powers to be a gift. He discusses on page 38 of his book, *Aromatherapy: The Essential Beginnings*, that “those who are gifted with psychic abilities” are among those who have “higher brain frequencies.”

Gary Young also exposed his New Thought bent and belief in Hindu chakras on his blog entries of 12/26/2013 and 1/2/2014 when discussing Young Living’s “Feelings Kit.”

Gary Young blog, 12/26/2013 (emphases added below):

“It’s important to remember that **our thoughts carry frequency. Essential oils absorb our thoughts. They are registered in the oils as intent, which is directed energy.** When you apply an intent-energized oil on your feet, it can saturate your cells within 60 seconds, stimulating

creative thinking and pushing negative energy out, thus increasing the frequencies of the cells throughout the body. In that uplifted state, you can create a new desire to be better tomorrow. **You have no limitations but those you choose to accept.**

VALOR: You should start with six drops of Valor on the soles of both feet at bedtime or whenever you decide to use this kit. I would also suggest Highest Potential along with the Valor. These two blends are **effective to erase limited thinking. Valor balances and equalizes the body's energies, thereby increasing oxygen intake to the pineal gland—the seat of our higher intelligence and intuitive faculties.** You will wake up more self-assured and more alive to start the day.

HARMONY: Harmony is a synergistic formulation to help create a harmonic balance in the energy field around the human body. When doing emotional work I found that if one of the energy centers, sometimes referred to as chakras, was not open, the emotions stored in that area would not release. Massage one drop of Harmony on each of the energy center points of your body. There are seven of them along the spine: Coccyx, Sacrum, Lumbar, Dorsal (heart), Cervical (where neck meets shoulders), Medulla (hollow place at center base of skull), and Pineal (center of forehead). You can also massage Harmony on the crown of the head. Harmony balances the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems which, in turn, gives us creativity and feelings of confidence.

RELEASE: Negative energy goes into the blood and then to the liver, where the toxic feelings can remain trapped. Thus, the liver becomes a storage place for anger, resentment, bitterness, hatred, jealousy, envy, addictions, and a host of destructive feelings. Apply a drop of Release on your tongue to let go of poisonous stored emotions from the liver. Rub Release over the liver area. Drink lots of pure water and do a liver cleanse.

FORGIVENESS: Apply Forgiveness around the navel with the right hand going clockwise several times and think of situations where you need to forgive yourself or others. We beat up on ourselves, but everyone makes mistakes. Yet we struggle to forgive our own mistakes and those of others. **This blend creates the frequency and the fragrance that stimulates the mind to move past the trauma or the problem. You do not need the other person to be present, because this is an inner adjustment on your part. Forgive that person or yourself and be thankful for the experience and the lesson it taught you. Inhale and apply Forgiveness while going through the process and repeat as often as necessary.**

PRESENT TIME: When we live in the past or dwell on the future, we are not being productive in the present. **Energize three drops of Present Time by making clockwise circles on the oil in the palm of your hand and then apply it to your thymus (the gland just under your sternum or breastbone).** This will keep you focused on the tasks of today."

The above advice is also very ritualistic. Why all the instructions on how to apply the oil? If the oil is truly "scientific" the mere fact that it entered the body should produce the healing desired. But the fact is

that these oils are not medicine in the scientific sense. Even if you could back it up with science with a greater than 30% statistical significance in a double-blinded study, this modality is self-consciously metaphysical. Used in aromatherapy, essential oils are the potions of a sorcerer and an appeal to the prince of this world Satan and his fallen angels for healing.

Examples from other blog entries written by Gary Young:

Surrender Negativity and Unconscious Manipulation – Thursday, October 18, 2012

“Disease is nothing more than manipulation, because disease creates control and gives you power over everyone around you. So then surrender, create the energy of giving it up, surrender that attachment; surrender that control.”

Understanding Energy – Thursday, September 6, 2012

“In order to understand emotions and spirituality, we must understand energy.

Energy is instant. Energy is consistent. Energy is non-tiring and non-fatiguing. How do you learn to channel it?”

The Caravan Dream Expands – June 2013

“Well, that dream lasted for 2½ hours, and it wasn’t about a reenactment of the three magi. I saw six caravans merge, and later through the dream realized they were six of the religions of the world: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Islam. They all merged into one caravan to forge a better future for the world’s children.”

The Transforming Power of Frankincense – Thursday, April 26th, 2012

“As you are diffusing Transformation, it will stimulate the receptors in the limbic system and will open up the pineal gland. You will start to have feelings and thoughts, and maybe you will even see in a dream state ideas or visions of what can happen in your life.”

An example of Young Living’s support of Hindu philosophy from the Company’s blog:

Five Secrets to Having More Energy and Vitality, Part III - December 12, 2011

“As we continue through the Five Secrets for More Energy series, we come to the third chakra, otherwise known as the fire chakra. This energy center is located at the solar plexus and corresponds to our passion for life and our will, drive, and ability to express anger. When our fire chakra energy is low, blocked, or depleted, we may experience depression or boredom and lose touch with our purpose and passion.

In our culture, expressing anger is a touchy subject. Performing polarity yoga combined with Young Living essential oils may help you unleash anger and help you reconnect to your passion.

Remember: According to energy medicine principles, if your energy is not moving, it gets stuck and stagnant—which leads to imbalances and possible illness. The secret to having more energy is to keep the energy you do have moving!

One of my favorite exercises to access the fire chakra is the Ha! Woodchopper.

The essential oils that I recommend for the fire chakra are peppermint, ginger, lemon, Transformation™, Purification®, Live with Passion™, and En-R-Gee™.”

This is a clear example of how interconnected Aromatherapy, and more specifically Young Living’s Essential Oils, is with false religion. For example, Hinduism teaches that chakras are connection points with vital energy or life force (prana). When there are blockages or imbalances, we need to adjust ourselves whether through self-atonement (self-correction through duty or ritual, such as Yoga), or manipulation of muscle/tissue/bone, or in this case application of oil. But we cannot displace God’s law with man’s traditions. Believing that sin is reconciled by any other source than by God Himself, or attributing a spiritual power to heal, is idolatry. Deuteronomy 5 says, “I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me.” In Acts 17:29, we are reminded that “being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone [*or in this case, an oil*], an image formed by the art and imagination of man.”

Gary Young makes the statement concerning Raindrop Treatment:

“If there are people in the room with negative attitudes, and if the individual applying the oils does not have a high enough frequency to block out that negative interference, the results will be less than optimal.”

DAVID STEWART

We now turn to the writings of David Stewart. Again, due to his reputation as an “expert witness” to the science, and his claims to the Bible’s acceptance of the use of Young Living’s products, we felt it is pertinent to demonstrate Stewart’s theological bent. Many folks within the Christian homeschool movement, and Gary Young himself, attribute credibility to his statements about YL’s products. The below statements were written by Stewart and were accessed through his Raindrop Messenger Archives, which is the newsletter for his organization, The Center for Aromatherapy Research and Education (CARE). The articles are only a few samples of the philosophy of David Stewart. They are not reproduced here in their entirety, as they are quite long. The full articles can be accessed at http://www.raindropttraining.com/messenger/article_index.shtml. Emphases added below.

From *Intuitive Decision Making With Applications in Aromatherapy* by Dr. David Stewart (Vol. 7, No. 6, Nov - Dec 2009): **Please Note: As stated above, the term “intuitive” is synonymous with the word “psychic” in modern New Age/ New Thought language.*

It is impossible to be an effective healer and anointer with oils without some level of intuitive ability.

We all have intuitions just as surely as we all have minds and bodies. Intuition is a God-given gift, an integral part of the Divine image in which we are all created.

Luke 17:21 declares that "The Kingdom of God is within you." That is to say, **God's attributes bequeathed to us by our creation as His children in His image are within each and every one of us. Tuning in with your intuition is tuning in with God's ever-present guidance within us.**

Developing our **intuition** is learning how to eliminate the **barriers between our consciousness and that of God within us** so that we can always hear his silent speaking voice whispering to us at all times. **Because true intuition is communication with God, which is why true intuition can never be wrong. It stems from an infallible source.**

Allopathic health care providers are neither trained nor encouraged to develop their intuitive skills and, in fact, are discouraged from deviating from a statistical approach backed by data and reason. **Health care tailored specifically to the individual can only be provided by intuitive practitioners who, while applying their logic and intellectual knowledge, also recognize the limits of logic and intellect. It is the same in applying essential oils for healing or wellness. Only by a combination of aromatherapy knowledge, data, and intuitive judgment can one receive the optimal benefits available through essential oils.**

D. Gary Young is the founder and president of Young Living Essential Oils, Inc. He is a pioneer and leading world authority on the cultivation of herbs and the distillation of therapeutic grade essential oils. He is **an intuitive healer** and scientist.

When potential clients for his clinic question Young's methods as being unscientific, he has been quoted as saying, "Do you want to follow what I feel to be an effective protocol for you to be healed right now or do you want to wait until science has proven it before we start the therapy?" *[Author's note: This statement was made after 3 paragraphs of defending Gary Young's "Raindrop Technique" as a cure for scoliosis which he discovered by psychic means to be caused by a virus. Scoliosis has not been proven to be caused by a virus. That theory continues to elude Young.]*

When you are suffering from an acute disease or serious life-threatening condition, you cannot wait to find a "scientific" solution that has yet to be discovered. You need effective therapy right now by whatever means obtained. Calling upon intuition bypasses the delays of lagging science and goes directly to a solution now, in present time.

D. Gary Young is a living example of intuitive science being ahead of traditional science. His many insights are a testimony to the fact that just because something intuitively derived has not been "scientifically proven" does not make it wrong or invalid.

When it comes to the therapeutic practice of aromatherapy, the dominant approach is intuitive since large bodies of statistical data are not yet available for most essential oils and for most situations where oils can be beneficially applied. Thus, for lack of science, aromatherapy healers are compelled to rely on common sense, anecdotal experiences, and intuition.

Those engaged in a healing mission with essential oils are constantly called upon to rely upon their intuitive faculties to decide which oils to use and how. This is necessary because there simply is not enough factual or scientific data available to make such decisions by intellectual means. This deficiency in applied research will eventually be remedied in time, perhaps over the next two centuries or so, but for the time being intuition is our best tool and, often, our only tool...

Everybody has intuition. Believe in it. Practice it. Nurture it. Develop it. And use it.

And lastly thank God for the gift of your finer senses, **because true intuition is a direct link to Divine wisdom** and an ever-present line through which God can speak to us and guide us in all aspects of our lives, both small and large.

From *It's All in Your Mind or Is It?* by David Stewart (Vol. 4, No. 5, Sept - Oct 2006):

MOST HEALINGS TAKE TIME

The New Testament speaks of various healings by Jesus and his disciples 73 times. **We tend to assume that all of these were instantaneous and miraculous. But if you dig into the Greek from which our English Bibles were translated, you find that most of them referred to gradual healing with therapy over time.** (See "Healing Oils of the Bible" for more on this.) The reason it often takes time to heal is because it takes time and effort for us to learn the spiritual lessons necessary to allow the healing to take place.

PRODUCTS OR POTIONS?

Many examples of New Thought philosophy and pagan "magical" thinking can be seen in the Essential Oil product descriptions below. The 2013 Young Living website, accessed on 10/11/13, advertises the following oils. This is merely a sample (emphasis added):

3 Wise Men: Is designed to open up the subconscious and promote feelings of reverence and spiritual awareness.

Valor: promotes feelings of strength, courage, and protection. Helps support energy alignment in the body.

Transformation empowers you to replace negative beliefs with uplifting thoughts, changing your overall attitude, emotions and behavior.

White Angelica: is a calming and soothing blend that encourages feelings of protection and security. It combines oils used during ancient times to enhance the body's **aura**, which brings

about a sense of strength and endurance. Many people use it as protection against negative energy.

Sacred Frankincense: is ideal for those who wish to take their **spiritual journey** and **meditation experiences to a higher level.**

Frankincense: Useful for visualizing, improving one's spiritual connection, and centering, it has comforting properties that help focus the mind and overcome stress and despair.

Abundance: is created to enhance the **frequency of the harmonic magnetic energy** field that surrounds us. This higher frequency creates what is called "**the law of attraction,**" which refers to the things we attract to ourselves. Abundance opens us to a wealth of possibilities.

Aroma Life: Pulsing with life, this vibrant blend **energizes your life force.** It is best applied over heart energy (chakra reference) - front and/or back.

Australian Blue: is a powerful, aromatic essence that unites ancient aboriginal wisdom with today's scientific knowledge about essential oils to uplift and inspire the mind and heart.

Dream Catcher: is an exotic formula designed to enhance the process of dreaming and visualization. The ability to hold onto your dreams - positive dreams that move you forward emotionally and spiritually - can lead to a greater ability to realize your desires and stay on the path of fulfillment. Dream Catcher also protects against negative dreams that may cloud your vision.

Egyptian Gold: Contains biblical oils that enhance moments of devotion and reverence.

Forgiveness: may enhance the ability to release hurtful memories and move beyond emotional barriers. The process of growth can only proceed when we have the ability to forgive and let go of negative emotions.

Gathering: helps overcome the chaotic energy that bombards our everyday life and clouds our focus, thus diverting us from the path leading to higher achievement. Gathering combines galbanum and frankincense oils from resins used by Moses for incense with sandalwood **to help gather our emotional and spiritual forces** so we can achieve greater unity of purpose.

Highest Potential: is an exotic blend designed to increase your capacity to achieve your highest potential. It combines the uplifting and inspirational qualities of Australian Blue with the power of Gathering to help bring greater unity of purpose. Jasmine is added to enhance self-confidence, while ylang ylang calms, soothes, and harmonizes.

Humility: is helpful for obtaining forgiveness and a deeper spiritual awareness. This soothing and calming combination of oils brings balance to your heart and mind, enabling you to find a peaceful place, where healing can begin.

Harmony: is an exquisite blend that promotes physical and emotional well-being by bringing harmonic balance to the **energy centers** of the body. (a cloaked referral to Hindu Chakra's).

Inspiration: includes oils traditionally used by the native peoples of Arabia, India, and North America for enhancing spirituality, prayer, meditation, and inner awareness. It creates an aromatic sanctuary for those seeking quiet meditation and spirituality.

For comparison let's look at some oils and their purported purposes from Wiccan, Scott Cunningham's book "The Complete Book of Incense, Oils and Brews." Scott Cunningham is now deceased and was considered a very prolific writer on occult topics and a specialist on herbs and oils. In his own words:

Basil: encourages happiness and peace and stimulates the conscious mind.

Black Pepper: used to promote protection and courage.

Juniper: Protection, purification and healing
Cedarwood: the energies of this oil enhances spirituality.
Frankincense: Promotes spirituality and meditative states.
Myrrh: Enhances spirituality and meditation
Cypress: Brings consecration and protection. Stimulates healing and eases the pain of loss.
Lime: Useful in purification and protection
Ginger: Love, courage and money attracting.

The above examples are disturbing. The average conservative Christian would be concerned if they knew of a friend who was handed a crystal to wear around his neck or rub on his skin, or given a rabbit's foot to put in his pocket, and told that by wearing these "natural" items he would release natural energies and life force to encourage feelings of love, or have a greater ability to forgive, or heal him of cancer, pneumonia, allergies. Yet, by simply replacing one object for another (e.g. a crystal for an oil), suddenly it becomes "more complicated than that."

We recommend Cuningham's book to see how similar Gary Young's belief system is to witchcraft. You will find that his philosophies are similar to those of Young and Stewart, but the difference is he is honest about the worldview he is espousing. What Christians are often unaware of is that witchcraft and the occult focus on energy and healing. Occultists believe that all they are doing is manipulating the "natural" and "scientific" energies that exist in our environment. That is it. The occult will also call on electromagnetic energy fields and their twisted version of quantum physics (better defined as quantum mysticism) to justify the "science" behind crystal energy, scrying (crystal ball gazing), psychic intuition, astrology, astral travel, etc.

Here is just one quote from the book "Modern Magick" by Donald Michael Kraig (a self-conscious pagan), to give you an example of what we are attempting to convey.

Vibratory Formula: It has long been an occult secret that all matter is made of vibration. Today many scientists depend on this being a fact in their research. If we follow this assumption that all matter is vibratory energy, then magick [*sic*] becomes a type of science which allows a person to affect vibrations. It becomes very valuable to us to develop an understanding of how to control vibratory energy. (P. 42)

Consider the words of Michael Harner, founder of the Foundation for Shamanic Studies and attributed with bringing shamanism to the Western world. He is pro-alternative medicine and he states that the word "holistic" is a euphemism for witchcraft, now known as shamanism:

"The burgeoning field of holistic medicine shows a tremendous amount of experimentation involving...techniques long practiced in shamanism, such as visualization, altered states of consciousness, aspects of psychoanalysis, hypnotherapy, meditation, positive attitude (positive/possibility thinking), stress reduction, and mental and emotional expression of personal will for health and healing."

As Harner explains shamanism involves positive affirmations intended to activate a universal force.

As we mentioned, most of the documentation we provide comes from Young Living, mostly due to the extensive literature available from YL, and conversely the limited materials available from other companies, such as dōTERRA. It is also because Young Living is the product of choice among people within our community, which is what prompted us to research this topic originally. However, based on how like-minded dōTERRA is to Young Living about their product claims on their website, we extend our caution to them also, and really toward anyone who makes the same metaphysical claims about their products' benefit (such as Aura Cacia or Butterfly Oils). Such products should be avoided for the purposes of medical, emotional and spiritual healing.

Let us end our philosophical discussion with another entry from the official blog of Young Living concerning the blended oil Sacred Angel. This piece was written by YL official blogger Kaye Lynne Murphy, LMT on December 20th, 2012.

“I rushed through breakfast, showering, and getting the treatment room ready. I waited anxiously for my first client to arrive and took out my special oil blend of Sacred Angel™. All I did was open the bottle when I felt the amazing scent of this oil come to me. I felt angels come into the room one by one. As the excitement of this special experience developed, I felt such a beautiful spirit enter the room.

I continued to feel the light and enlightenment from Sacred Angel for days afterward. These days were full of pure bliss, which filled my whole soul with light and love. It is so difficult to put into words the spiritual enlightenment I felt from this oil blend. It gave me a higher sense of being and enriched my soul. I truly felt the energy from the vibration of Sacred Angel envelope [*sic*] my whole being and raise me to a higher level of awareness. In this greater awareness, I was more in tune with my higher power and was elevated to a level where I could help others better reach their awareness.”

The Theological Problems

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

God has described Himself as distinct from His creation (Gen 1:1), transcendent (Isa 64:4, Ps 145:3), and immanent (Ps 139:7, Rom 8:9). The seemingly subtle, yet shouting, distinction between how Western supernaturalism, the East, and indigenous religions understand this idea in contrast to what the Bible teaches is understood in the idea of God's *presence* versus His *essence*. His presence fills His creation (leaving His thumbprint), whereas His *essence* deifies nature, which would effectively make His creation something to be worshiped (Rom 1:25). Though He indwells His people, He does not apotheosize (make divine) His people. Nor does He give them life-giving power, beyond the ability to procreate. The East, as well as indigenous animistic religions in the West, do not mind worshipping created things. In fact,

worshipping idols, trees, rocks, people, stars and the sky, and manipulating esoteric energies, is a large part of many of the religions that espouse the life-force within their belief systems, like Hinduism, Tibetan Buddhism, Taoism, Shintoism, as well as animism and Shamanism.

Young Living is a vitalistic organization and promotes New Age/New Thought philosophies in most of the materials it publishes and endorses. It is irrelevant if the individual seller or user does not believe these things. The Young Living Company has a multi-level marketing structure, and by becoming a distributor or user of their products that person is also selling and promoting the philosophies that they ascribe: vitalism, energy medicine, the New Age/New Thought and, by extension, Hinduism - even if you are doing so ignorantly or unintentionally. Whether or not you are intentional about it, by using essential oils (or any “God-created” object) according to the aromatherapeutic recipe or guidelines, ultimately you are participating in the occult: Witchcraft.

We are commanded in Deut 18:10-14 (NKJV), “There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you.”

Following the recipe from someone who believes in a divine Life Force that fills natural, non-human objects, which that recipe works by calling up or filling the substance with that same Life Force, and further when it works with your body to heal you; all done according to specific ingredients and guidelines, this is in violation of Deut 18. The practice and use of essential oils in this manner is considered witchcraft because it works as by a potion, the intent to be working by magical or hidden powers.

In speaking of life energy and the vital force O’Mathuna and Larimore explain;

Alternative Therapies based on “life energy” use principles just like those generally attributed to magic. Although “magic” is difficult to precisely define, magical practices do have common features. Magic involves special techniques or rituals by which people attempt to manipulate supernatural powers to meet their needs. Practitioners of energy medicine claim they can manipulate a supernatural force (*the vital force*) using certain techniques to bring about healing or relaxation.

When magic doesn’t work, it can still do harm. – An even bigger problem can occur when magical practices do work. Long associated with occult traditions, many of these (alternative therapies) can lead people into all sorts of entanglements with evil spiritual beings. **Kurt Koch, a Christian Theologian and authority on the occult, recounts many stories of people being healed by alternative therapies without knowing the occult connection. People inadvertently received occult healing and paid for it with emotional and spiritual health.** (emphasis added)

The source of the healing is not a common remedial chemical compound that can be tested in a lab for medicinal effects; nor do the producers point to a bio-chemical process and support it with evidence. They, themselves, attribute the spiritual world to the healing power. This is not marketing. It is the outworking of a candid, epistemologically self-conscious worldview. It is nothing less than clouded judgment, sometimes flat out denial of the truth, to suggest that the worldview or phraseology of aromatherapy is merely a failure of Christianity by giving over our dominion mandate to the pagans. Ignorance is believing, saying or doing something without knowledge of what those ideas or actions mean or lead to. If we insist on believing something that is simply false, or worse sinful, when the facts are presented, we can no longer claim ignorance. Further, we are obligated as Christians to filter everything we are taught and do through the grid of Scripture (Deut 30:14-16, I Cor 10:5, Rom 12:2, Acts 17:11). This should not have to be pressed upon the Christian conscience. We ought to take initiative in these areas out of our adoration toward God in Christ; our desire to please Him because we love Him and want to walk in His ways.

We as believers are instructed to have nothing to do with the Baals. There is no such thing as Christian Baal worship, or Christian sorcery. As Christians, we take dominion in two ways: By redeeming and making good use of earthly materials, or destroying them. Making use of the occult for God's glory is akin to Saul's sin of collecting the livestock to make sacrifices to God (I Samuel 15:10-23). It is an affront to Him.

Do not be deceived, God will not be mocked. More than enough evidence has been given that Young Living Essential Oils, including its founder, teach and promote abominations. Most homeschoolers would never consider sending their children to public schools because they neither support nor tolerate in any way the philosophy or worldview of those schools. Likewise, many couples avoid marriage counselors who have a Jungian or Freudian worldview, since how can these therapists truly subjugate the humanistic philosophy of their training to the teaching of Scripture? Yet, without any hesitation, many Christians will not only adopt equally bad philosophies, but put those ideas in to deliberate action. What Young Living Essential oils and many other essential oil companies promote is blatant occultism. We rightly rejoice when a New Age/Occult store closes its doors, yet many around us peddle the wares of Young Living and promote their heretical ideas through their books amongst other people. We pass around books like *Reference Guide For Essential Oils* that candidly speak of chakras and mystical superstitious beliefs and potions without any thought about how much damage or further health problems we may cause.

Paul warns us in his letter to the Galatians: "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5:19-21 (NKJV)

The following passage from Christian Doctors Donal O’Mathuna and Walt Larimore adds clarity to the conclusion we are attempting to explain. From their book, *The Christian Handbook of Alternative Medicine*:

The Bible Clearly teaches that good and evil spiritual forces exist. Many today ignore this teaching. Performing spiritual acts with good intentions and getting good results does not excuse being unaware of the source of power behind those acts. Scripture states that evil spiritual forces are powerful and dangerous and should not be dabbled with (Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 4:4)

In our opinion, it is naïve and unsafe to think or teach that Satan would not use his powers to heal people especially since healing is an important sign of the Messiah. Satan will resort to “good deeds” to deceive people and draw them away from God. Jesus warned us, “For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive even the elect- if that were possible’ (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22).

For a further discussion and insight into demonic healing/deception, we recommend “Psychic Healing” by John Weldon and Zola Levitt and also the book “Unholy Spirits” by Gary North.

THE SOLUTION - FOUND AT THE CROSS

So what do you do if you have a medicine cabinet full of aromatherapy paraphernalia and oils? Let us look at scripture for at least one approach. Acts 19:18-20:

“Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.”

In this passage we see that those who were involved in the occult started by confessing what they had done. Second, they destroyed their occult tools. They did not use the other side of the scroll to copy scripture or to write a recipe. Those who practiced sorcery got rid of everything despite the value. For us personally, we confessed our sin and then threw away the bottles. You may not feel compelled to throw out the bottle, especially if it is from a company that does not specifically endorse occult practices or ideologies (such as in the case of household cleaners or perfumes). But it certainly would not offend God if you did so. You may decide to keep the bottle and empty its contents; and as someone once suggested, use the bottle as a paperweight.

Just like the Israelites, men today are prone to wander and follow diviners and sorcerers. Hosea 3:4 is a reminder how easily we go after other gods out of sheer want: “Though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes....For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol.”

No one likes pain. No one wants to suffer. But we need to be careful about whom we seek to remedy our problems. The idea that essential oils, or anything else for that matter, contain a life-giving energy comes straight from the Hindu belief system that espouses that all living things have a self-imbued life-giving force (Sanskrit “prana”). It is more than just the generic “spirit” of life. It is a separate entity that fills the universe. The energy they refer to is not a molecular energy in the classical sense. It is a cosmic energy that most Eastern belief systems say connects all living things in the universe. It is sometimes identified as God’s energy or spirit; at its core it is a pantheistic idea. The “force” is a demon.

There is a difference between saying God has infused certain properties in plants with healing properties, and saying that plants contain a life-source to heal or enable forgiveness of sin. No orthodox Christian would ever ascribe such powers to oils. They would reject such ideas as heresy, and point to God as the source of these things. Yet, that is the very thing that therapeutic essential oil producers claim.

As stated earlier, we are not claiming that there is anything intrinsically evil about essential oils. We understand the essential oils are derived from nature and there is a valid way to use them. But we need to ask ourselves if we are using them in the way that God intended.

If someone wants to use essential oils for such purposes such as making cosmetics, cooking, or relaxation through a muscle massage, we suggest finding a brand that does not present their product in a mystical fashion. These companies are harder to find than some of the larger ones, but they do exist.

As stated in Isaiah, God’s judgments are clear:

“I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, ‘Here I am, here I am,’ To a nation that was not called by My name. I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good, According to their own thoughts; A people who provoke Me to anger continually to My face; Who sacrifice in gardens, And burn incense on altars of brick; Who sit among the graves, And spend the night in the tombs; Who eat swine’s flesh, And the broth of abominable things is in their vessels; Who say, ‘Keep to yourself, Do not come near me, For I am holier than you!’ These are smoke in My nostrils, A fire that burns all the day. “Behold, it is written before Me: I will not keep silence, but will repay— Even repay into their bosom— Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together,” Says the Lord, “Who have burned incense on the mountains And blasphemed Me on the hills; Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom.” Isaiah 65:1-7 (NKJV)

SCIENCE OR SCIENCE FICTION?

We have been told by folks, “Well, I do not believe in Young Living’s philosophy, but only the science.” We take the position that Scripture is sufficient for all of life, including the area of health care. So, our primary concern on this topic is “what does the Bible say?” If our claim is moral, then our backing has to be exclusively Scriptural, since there is no other source of Divine revelation, and consequently, morality,

than Holy Scripture. But for the benefit of those readers who insist on claiming scientific merit in practicing aromatherapy, we still hold that even if there wasn't a Biblical directive in this area, science simply does not support the claims.

David Stewart himself admits there is no science in his articles quoted above. Medicinal use of essential oils has been tested and found to be lacking, except as a form of relaxation, which may be due to merely the message that usually accompanies the treatment. There is also scientific merit in their use as a vapor for congestion, etc.

Edzard Ernst is, according to the UK's *The Independent*, the world's first professor of complementary medicine (<http://web.archive.org/web/20100417080412/http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/features/complementary-therapies-the-big-con-813248.html>). Ernst researches complementary medicine with an emphasis on efficacy and safety. His research mainly surveys systematic reviews and meta-analyses of clinical trials. He has over 700 papers published in scientific journals. He has said that only about 5 percent of alternative medicine is backed by evidence with the remainder being either insufficiently studied or backed by evidence, showing lack of efficacy (<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg19826531.400-interview-the-complementary-medicine-detective.html>).

Concerning Aromatherapy in his book *Trick of Treatment*, Ernst states:

“Aromatherapy has short term “distressing” effects which can contribute to enhanced well-being after treatment. There is no evidence that aromatherapy can treat a specific disease.”

The above conclusion is also supported by Stephen Barrett who states that “pleasant odors can be enjoyable and may enhance people's efforts to relax. However, there is no evidence that aromatherapy products provide the health benefits claims by their proponents.”

This is what Wikipedia had to say about Dr. Stephen Barrett:

Stephen Joel Barrett is an American retired psychiatrist, author, co-founder of the National Council Against Health Fraud (NCAHF), and the webmaster of Quackwatch. He runs a number of websites dealing with quackery and health fraud. He focuses on consumer protection, medical ethics, and scientific skepticism. Quackwatch received a 2003 award as a useful source for online consumer information.

Further credentials and accolades for Barrett's scholarship can be found in the Appendix.

According to “The Christian Handbook of Alternative Medicine” by O’Mathuna and Larimore, “Aromatherapy is scientifically questionable and unproven.” There is much more evidence that can be accessed through books and the Internet that, through solid clinical trials, aromatherapy does not do more than provide relaxation or appear to heal beyond the placebo effect.

As stated above, even if this modality could be scientifically proven does not mean a Christian can automatically give approval for its use. For example transcendental meditation and mindfulness both

have backing by medical doctors and scientific studies to support “some benefits.” However, neither practice is permitted or beneficial for the Christian.

Having said this, we need to be caution against the ditch of Gnosticism. Again, as we said earlier, there is nothing intrinsically evil about essential oils. They can make a room smell good, or help with massaging knotted muscles. The spiritual and the physical are connected and do play off each other. We are not condoning the idea that the physical is evil and the spiritual is good. Neither can we ignore the fact that the producers of essential oils aren't selling them to Walmart as hair products. Nor are they saying you can use mustard to rid yourself of fear. Essential oils is the potion of choice in aromatherapy.

Addressing the Arguments

“BUT, WHAT ABOUT...”

The following reasons have been used by Christians for practicing aromatherapy, “But it works.” “It's is only oil, a substance that was there at creation.” “I do not believe in the bad philosophy but only the science. The bad philosophy is only advertising to appeal to the New Agers.” “Just because Young and Stewart are religious apostates does not mean I can't use God's natural medicine.” “Isn't this just like food sacrificed to idols? Eating the meat in the marketplace is a matter of conscience.” We will now take a little time to address these responses.

The assumption that many Christians make is that since God made the raw materials and since we are not knowingly invoking a “spell” or imputing “New Age” thinking into aromatherapy, then all is OK. It's what we call the “creation” argument. It goes like this, “The Bible tells us that everything in creation belongs to God and we should receive it all with thanksgiving. For even Psalm 24 says, ‘The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Therefore we are free (perhaps commanded) to use whatever is natural with thanksgiving and joy.’” There are certain things that are off limits to Christians. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were not permitted to redeem the high places and Asherah poles in some intellectual way. Simply removing the spiritual element of those high places of Baal worship wasn't sufficient. In Numbers 33:51-53 (NIV), God said, “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places.’” People fail to recognize that some things are not open to redeeming and using. The philosophies in which this healing modality is based are inseparable from the practice of aromatherapy. We cannot contradistinguish medical practices from their pantheistic and Chinese philosophies any more than can we as Christians defend the use of a Ouija board by using Christian terminology, or claiming righteous intent. So if the substance was developed for the purpose of using it in an occult fashion, and only works in that manner, we as Christians have to ask ourselves, is the substance merely being used for the glory of God or are we persisting with something because of the feeling we get or the money we earn from it?

Another error that Christians make is to assume that pragmatism equals freedom. In Numbers 20:10-12 Moses is being commanded to speak to the rock in the desert order for water to flow from it. However, Moses did not follow God's commands, he hit the rock twice with a rod instead and water gushed forth

for the thirsty Israelites and their livestock. Moses striking the rock worked and its results were positive and quantifiable, all the Israelites got to enjoy water. Moses merely used natural tools, items from creation but the Lord was angry! Verse 12 “And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because you believed me not, to sanctify me in front of the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given you.” Moses and Aaron were forbidden to enter the Promised Land because they did not follow the instructions of the Lord. Their method was natural, it worked and had positive results, but the actions of Moses were grievous in the eyes of the Lord, and Moses was judged for them. Moses would not have been able to dig himself out of the hole by using pragmatism to justify his actions or by simply saying he was using God’s creation. 2 Corinthians 6 leaves no room for syncretism. “Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you.” (ESV) This applies not just to “spiritual” things, but even to medicine we use on our skin: “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of **body and spirit**, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” 2 Cor 7:1 (ESV) (emphasis added)

“Why can’t we just dismiss what a few New Agers say about this form of medicine; they just pollute the philosophy?” We don’t want to be controlled by fear or under the teachings of men. Simply because someone defiles something, we must remember the caution from Paul in not living by faith and not trusting God:

Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? Colossians 2:20-22 NKJV

The distinction between corrupted thinking and occult practice is in understanding the difference between the mere teachings and commandments of men, and the fellowshiping with demons (1 Cor 10:20). We must avoid the pitfall of not letting someone pollute our thinking if we are giving thanks to God for what He has given us. But neither should we ignore the signals that what we are practicing might be wrong, and in fact, directly violating what God asks us not to do.

After the “creation” argument, the biggest criticism we hear is ‘isn’t this just like food sacrificed to idols? Doesn’t the Bible say that we have freedom to use materials God gives us as long as we use it with thanksgiving? I mean, if I “eat meat” (in this case use essential oils to bolster immune support) that I don’t know has been “sacrificed to idols,” (comes from an occult source) then at least in private (not in front of a brother who thinks it’s occult), I am not a stumbling block to my brother and therefore have freedom to “eat” (use aromatherapy). Let’s turn our attention to the actual text. In 1 Corinthians 10, the surrounding passage says this:

Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to

eat and drink and rose up to play.” We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. For “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else’s conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. I Cor 10:5-33 ESV

In evaluating the text, Paul is not directing an indiscriminate, unconditional life of freedom that has no qualifications or limits. Now, most conservative Christians would not argue with this point. As we know “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2:10) In fact, verse 14 of I Cor 10, which is just a few verses before the “freedom verse”, states clearly that we are to flee idolatry. The qualifier here is that as long as moral law is not violated, we have freedom to live as we choose. The other caveat is that we do so as long as we don’t hinder the conscience of our brother. Outside of that, we are indeed free! Live, brothers, and sisters, in the manner to which God called you. The passage pertains to this topic of medicine in this

way: Seek whatever method of finding healing in whatever way works, in faith, by thanking God as the true Physician. However stay away from fellowship with demons. So yes, the passage here does apply to healing arts – in every way. But there is a prohibition; there is a moral boundary laid down.

A parallel passage is Romans 14. The theme here is unity and not to quibble over minor points at the expense of loving our brother. Some have tried to argue, in a similar way to the passage above, that we can agree to disagree, and that arguing over these points does not edify. Specifically, if we believe CAM practices are “unclean”, then for us it is. But if our brother sees them as “clean”, then for him it is. For “it is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God.” (v21,22) Our contention is that by not exhorting our brother in these matters, we are creating a hindrance to him, as Galatians 6 describes. Our pastor gave a presentation on this topic and explained the passage this way. He said “Love your brother. If you are endorsing idolatry, witchcraft, and false ideas, you are the weaker brother. If you are not endorsing idolatry, witchcraft, and false ideas, he is the weaker brother. Either way, your goal is to not destroy your brother by your “eating” and to continue to strengthen your brother by condemning idolatry and strengthening your conscience and your brother’s conscience concerning what is good and evil.”

We affirm the freedom we have in Christ that is clearly presented in Scriptures. “For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?” (I Cor 10:29-30) “Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil.” (Rom 14:13,16) We desire that all Christians enjoy the freedom we have in Christ. There is a wonderful experience for believers to learn from one another, bless one another, and edify one another. Our lives, as living sacrifices, not only exist to glorify and worship our Creator, but to strengthen our brother in love. “Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient” (I Tim 1:8-9). “To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.” (Tit 1:15) Therefore, let us enjoy our freedom from our sins and truly live for the Glory of God. These words are for those who wish to use herbs, or oils or physical therapy in any manner that is separate from demonic “participation” (ESV) or “fellowship” (KJV) (I Cor 10:20). Brothers, you can enjoy the things God has given us, even herbs and oils. Let us be wise, and discerning, for we are Christ’s ambassadors.

Conclusion

We need to be crystal clear about the words we use and the activities we engage in, and not turn a blind eye because of our deep desire to be healed from our sufferings. It is a good thing to want to be free from our pain, but even Christ came to this world to suffer and left a warning for His disciples that we too will suffer and endure many things in order to be sanctified. Nor must we conclude that because we want something to be ok, that we simply draw the conclusion that it is. The philosophies behind the

healing power of aromatherapy are pagan. Discovering that the AMA and the FDA has flaws in its philosophies and practices will not erase that, no matter how hard we try.

As demonstrated above, aromatherapy is rooted in vitalism and New Age philosophies. In addition, many of the companies that produce essential oils for use in healing espouse New Thought beliefs. We distinguished between generic, household use of essential oils and aromatherapy. We presented the philosophical and theological problems for the Christian, and explained how aromatherapy is a form of witchcraft. We urge our brothers and sisters in Christ to seek forgiveness from the Lord and put an end to this practice. He is the only place there can be true healing.

May the Lord give us all mercy and wisdom.

APPENDIX

Some helpful links for further study:

Wayne Dyer:

<http://www.youngliving.com/convention/2013/en/keynotes.html?ic=slide2>

http://christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_WayneDyerEssay.html

Gary Young:

<http://www.aromaticsage.com/GYRDT.html>

<http://aromamedical.org/articles/EO-&-Cats.html>

<http://www.aromamedical.org/Reviews/Gary-Young.htm>

Louise L. Hay: A favorite of YL

http://www.abundanthealth4u.com/Book_I_Can_Do_It_p/8954.htm

<http://www.louisehay.com/about-louise/>

Articles from C.A.R.E.'s newsletter, The Raindrop Messenger:

<http://www.raindropttraining.com/messenger/v7n6.html#intuitive>

<http://www.raindropttraining.com/messenger/v7n1.html#quantum>

<http://www.raindropttraining.com/messenger/v4n5.html#basis>

<http://www.raindropttraining.com/messenger/v5n2.html#spiritual> (Article by Judy DeRuvo)

Occult Radio program features David Stewart:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAaWzx7uRss>

Robert Tisserand critiques David Stewart's book: August 29, 2012 blog post: "Book review: The Chemistry of Essential Oils Made Simple"

<http://www.aromaconnection.org/>

Stephen J. Barrett is a 1957 graduate of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and completed his psychiatry residency in 1961. In 1967 and 1968 he followed part of a correspondence course in American Law and Procedure at La Salle Extension University (Chicago). He was a practicing physician until retiring from active practice in 1993, with his medical license listed as "Active-Retired" in good standing: "No disciplinary actions were found for this license."

In addition to webmastering his websites, Barrett is a co-founder, vice-president and a board member of the National Council Against Health Fraud (NCAHF). He is a scientific advisor to the American Council on Science and Health, and a Fellow of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (CSI). From 1987 through 1989, he taught health education at Pennsylvania State University. Barrett is the consulting editor for the Consumer Health Library at Prometheus Books] has been a peer-review panelist for at least two medical journals. He has also served on the editorial board of Medscape and The Scientific Review of Alternative Medicine

Barrett has received a number of awards and recognition for his consumer protection work against quackery. Quackwatch received the award of Best Physician-Authored Site by MD NetGuide, May 2003. In 1984, he received an FDA Commissioner's Special Citation Award for Public Service in fighting nutrition quackery. He was included in the list of outstanding skeptics

of the 20th century by Skeptical Inquirer magazine. In 1986, he was awarded honorary membership in the American Dietetic Association. The magazine Spiked-online included Barrett in a survey of 134 persons they termed "key thinkers in science, technology and medicine."

A couple of good articles written by Dr. Barrett:

<http://www.quackwatch.org/11Ind/young.html>

<http://www.quackwatch.org/04ConsumerEducation/Nonrecorg/bernadean.html>

"There is no such thing as a 'therapeutic grade essential oil" - Tony Burfield & Kendra Kirkham 2006-2009.

<http://www.quadrivium-supplies.com/cropwatchtgescorrected.pdf>

How aromatherapy does and does not work:

<http://aromamedical.org/PDF/How%20aromatherapy%20does%20and%20does%20not%20work.pdf>

Essential Oil Safety – The Known and the Unknown:

<http://aromamedical.org/PDF/Essential%20oil%20safety.pdf>

Good overview of essential oils by a Christian doctor:

<http://www.cmf.org.uk/publications/content.asp?context=article&id=664>

These links provide a good explanation of the teachings of Hinduism:

<http://hinduism.iskcon.org/index.htm>

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/index.htm>

Further quotes by David Stewart:

From CARE's Philosophy & Purpose statement:

(<http://www.raindropttraining.com/care/purpose.shtml>)

THE NATURAL state of all men and women is health. In the creation of humankind, it was God's plan for all people to live long, vigorous, productive lives in happiness and peace.

There is no true healing but that facilitated by ourselves through changing the habits and attitudes that led to our conditions and releasing, by faith, the healing power of God within us.

Through research and education into the science and art of applying essential oils, accompanied by other **holistic modalities to which aromatherapy naturally leads**, the public will be empowered to take control of their own health care.

It is our mission to reach and teach as many as possible with these liberating and healing truths that the **people of the world may live long lives in peace and happiness and in harmony with the perfect blueprint and image of their creator.** (emphasis added)

From *Quantum Physics, Essential Oils & the Mind-Body Connection* by David Stewart (Vol. 7, No. 1, Jan-Feb 2009):

Before we apply the concepts of quantum physics to essential oils, let us discuss some other related research concerning the interaction of mind and matter. Let's consider essential oils as **"living energy"** and consider how **human intent** and the **decisions we may [sic] can determine the action of an oil.**

We know that **the human mind can affect the electromagnetic frequencies of essential oils. Prayer and positive thinking elevates the frequencies while negative thoughts will decrease the frequencies...**

Essential oils also have electrical properties, which are subject to our thoughts and feelings.

When someone says, "What will this oil do for me?" You can reply, "What do you want it to do? This bottle of oil is only a packet of possibilities. Which possibility it manifests for you will depend upon your thoughts and desires. For a person with different thoughts and desires, it would manifest different possibilities. So decide what you want it to do."

What this means is that the receiver of an essential oil must participate in their own healing. **The oils are not healers.** They are only vehicles that must be facilitated by our supportive thoughts for them to work with optimal benefit. Because of their innate chemistry and **the intent given to them when grown, distilled, packaged, and distributed, therapeutic grade essential oils will work to an extent even without the conscious participation and mental support of the receiver.** But they will work much better with such support and participation. **This is also why you want to use only pure therapeutic grade essential oils that are imbued with the healing intent of the manufacturer and marketer,** from the herbs of the field to the bottle that is sold.

When an oil is applied to any part of the body you can mentally direct it to go to wherever it is needed and affirm the outcome you desire. Your affirmation must be more than a one-time thought, but must come from within your deepest convictions and faith and be repeated and consciously retained until the desired results are manifested.

Essential oils work on all human levels: physical, mental, emotional, social, and **spiritual.** Some even say that essential oils can work on **the financial** level, as well, which is why Young Living has a blend called **"Abundance."** **Remember, by the laws quantum physics, "Essential oils amplify intent (psychic abilities)." This is true whatever your intent may be, but is much truer when your intent is a good one and in harmony with a higher power.**

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