

Oprah & The Secret Deception

How the "Law of Attraction" is not compatible with Christianity

Since its debut in 2006, Rhonda Byrne's book "The Secret" has sold over four million copies. The message of "The Secret" is that 'we all have the power to determine our own destiny.' We can all create our own reality. Through fully and consistently applying the 'Universal Laws of Attraction,' we can be 'who we want to be' and 'have everything we want to have.' In February of this year, Oprah dedicated two programs entirely to the book and has since become an ardent believer in the "Law of Attraction." The Law of attraction is a belief that all things are the direct result of what we think. Definitions include:

- You get what you think about, whether wanted or unwanted. The Law of Attraction is neutral.
- All forms of matter and energy are attracted to that which is of a like vibration.
- You are a living magnet.
- You get what you put your energy and focus on, whether wanted or unwanted.
- Energy attracts like energy
- Everything draws to itself that which is like itself.

This new age philosophy has been around for a long time. Unfortunately, it is being adopted by Christians who see no conflict with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only is the philosophy in contraction to the gospel of Christ, it is in my opinion demonic. We are living in a day in which many Christians are desiring a version of Christianity that is free of burdens and expectations, has an explanation of all of life's toughest questions and can help us live life to our fullest potential. The result is Christianity without a Cross. Fr. Schmemmann prophetically said it well of our age, "Our time is the time of imposture, of spiritual fraud and counterfeit taking the form of an 'angel of light' (II Cor. 11:14). And the main danger, the main deficiency of this whole phenomenon is that too many people today...seem to view "spirituality" as a kind of entity in itself, almost totally disconnected from the entire Christian view and experience of God, world and man, from the totality of Christian faith (Schmemmann, Of Water and the Spirit)."

Every age must test the spirits and their messages in light of the central doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ. St. John warned the early Christians: "Beloved, cease believing every spirit, but keep on putting the spirits to the test, if they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. In this know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit which confesses *that* Jesus Christ hath come in *the* flesh is of God; and every spirit which confesses not *that* Jesus Christ hath come in *the* flesh is not of God. And this is that *spirit* of the antichrist, which ye have heard that it is coming, and now already it is in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is the *One* in you than the *one* in the world. [1 Jn. 4:1-4]. When the "Universal Laws of Attraction" are put to this test, Christ is not mentioned, He is not confessed as the source of all truth instead a *false* God is created. It teaches that *you* make things happen in your life by having faith in *yourself*, and an *unknown energy source* will give you

everything you desire. In the end ... *you* are made to be God. Having Oprah as a cheerleader (now only on XM radio), the perpetuation of this philosophy runs the risk drawing Christians even further away from the Gospel truths. The following is a brief examination of the *Secret Deception* according in light of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let us begin in the garden. Adam and Eve are warned by God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and if they did, they would surely die. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.' (Gen 2:15-17). Along comes the serpent with a, well, you guessed it, a *secret*. 'No, No!' he says, 'Here is the secret,' "the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' (Gen 3:1-7). Now hear what "Abraham" (the spirits that are channeled through Esther-Abraham Hicks) teaches, "There is nothing that you cannot be, or do or have, you are magnificent creator, and you are here by your powerful and deliberate wanting to be here." Our creed reads: "I believe in One God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." We are the product of God's creative will and not self-generated balls of *energy* that can have it all. "Abraham" teaches the same old lie as Satan did: "You cannot die; you are Everlasting Life. In grace, you may choose to relax and allow your gentle transition back into your Non-physical state of pure, positive Energy. Your natural state is that of Forgiveness. (from Esther-Abraham-Hicks Web site)." What about the kingdom of heaven and the judgment of hell, of God taking the form of a servant, His death upon the Cross, His resurrection on the third day and His destruction of the devil and his power over death? The source of any teaching that contradicts basic Christian doctrine is indeed demonic.

How does this happen? Mrs. Hicks relaxes, meditates for a moment and "Abraham" begins to speak through her. Such practices are a form of occultism. Jesus performed an exorcism and revealed that many demons were working together to destroy a person. In like manner, "Abraham" represents *many* and speaks in the plural. "We come forth not to alter your beliefs but to reacquaint you with the eternal laws of the universe... that you may intentionally be the creator you were meant to be, for there is not another who attracts into your experience that which you are getting, you are doing it all...you create with your thoughts." These demons deny God's existence with the goal is to alter our beliefs in Christ.

When Esther Hicks is channeling Abraham she describes the feeling as "having knowledge of everything," and being in a state of bliss because of it. What can be wrong with a "good feeling?" What is wrong is that which the demons promise is a lie. Jesus Christ came to earth and reveals to the Church all mysteries concerning Himself and God's Kingdom. "And He answered and said to them, 'Because it hath been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it hath not been

given [Mt. 13:11]." The Orthodox Church is entrusted with God's mysteries and truth; everything must be tested against this faith and this truth.

The fact is that we are looking for help in our lives in all the wrong places. Meditation has proven beneficial for many people today. As Orthodox Christians are we aware of our own tradition concerning the Jesus prayer, "Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me a sinner." Practicing the Jesus prayer not only calms the body and mind but also brings us into the very presence of God, something that meditating alone cannot accomplish. Prayer opens the realities of discipleship as being full of tribulations, persecutions and afflictions and at the same time victory and hope in Christ and His Kingdom. Taking up one's Cross and the sufferings associated with struggling against the passions and sin becomes for us the way of salvation, the way of Christ, the One to be imitated. The Cross is a "Life-Giving" and has "brought joy into all the world." We cannot have joy without the Cross of Jesus Christ- that is the real secret!