

the NEW AGE of *Alpha*

A critique of the Alpha Course for those who know their Bible

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DESPITE failing to reverse the decline in church attendance in Britain, the Alpha Course has swept the globe and is being used by an incredibly wide range of groups – including Methodists and Lutherans, Roman Catholics and Seventh-Day Adventists.¹ Where other evangelistic initiatives have petered out very swiftly, Alpha has done the opposite. From its roots in the late 1970s, Alpha has grown to stunning proportions today and over a million souls try it each year. Let us uncover its secret...

THE SECRET

Nicky Gumbel, Alpha's director since 1990, puts its wide appeal down to a completely new approach for a 'post-Christian age'. Not only has he over-

¹ *Alpha News* #16, p. 10, proudly reports that "six churches including ... the **Seventh-Day Adventist**, are joining together to run ... Alpha".

hauled the *cosmetics* of the program in order to make Alpha more relaxed and pleasant, he has even revised the Course *content* for this same reason: "[T]he talks themselves were [made] ... as **attractive** as possible".² Thus Alpha is now able to be advertised as "a gentle and enjoyable experience",³ and attendees report that "The **whole** thing was just **so** easy going, so much **fun** ... It was genuine **fun**".⁴ Indeed, guests have likened the Course to "a free weekly therapy session".⁵

² *An Introduction to the Alpha Course*, official HTB booklet (no date, 24 pages, white cover, A4-size), p. 5. (The reasons cited there for the revamp do not include making Alpha as *biblical* as possible!)

³ *The Good News*, (an advert comprising a special insert for the *Aberdeen Evening Express*), summer 1998, p. 5.

⁴ *Alpha News*, Mar – Jul 2000, p. 11. (All emphases in this booklet are mine.)

⁵ Report by Julia Llewellyn-Smith, *Daily Express*, 16:Nov:98, quoted in HTB's *UK Focus* newspaper, Dec 1998, pp. 4-5.

Alpha's attractiveness is a key matter. As one Roman Catholic Bishop – and friend of Alpha's home church – puts it, “[The Course] meets people where they are; it befriends them. They feel **affirmed** and they **enjoy** it. Because they enjoy it and are enthused by it, they invite their friends to attend the next course and so it grows”.⁶

THE ISSUES

The problem is that the full gospel is **not** very enjoyable, for the full gospel tells unbelievers they are on their way to a **lake of fire**. (Regrettably, this is not yet stated on Alpha.) The gospel does not “affirm” us; it warns us that God is almighty and terrifyingly holy – and that we, in contrast, are wretched sinners. It alerts us to the fact that, unless we repent of our sinful nature, we are under God's wrath and utterly without hope. It also teaches us that God's infinite purity means there was only one way we could be forgiven – i.e. if God Himself came to earth as a man, lived a sinless life, and allowed Himself to be tortured and crucified in our place. If folks hear all this, *and do not harden their hearts against it*, the full gospel humbles and breaks them. Either way, it can hardly be described as “easy going” or “fun”.

⁶ Ambrose Griffiths, *New Christian Herald*, 04:Oct:1997. (Please note: I have used UK spellings in this booklet.)

Alpha's guests often testify to feeling “changed” after the Course, but many people testify to precisely these same changes after *secular psychotherapy*. From both, participants come away feeling affirmed and, as Nicky Gumbel approvingly quotes one Alpha veteran phrasing it, “accepted **for who I am**”.⁷ But only *Christ* is truly acceptable to God, which is why we all need to be “found **in Him**” (Php. 3:9). The Bible says that even faithful believers are “unprofitable” and must abide in Christ – so anything which has the affirming effect seen above cannot be the real gospel. Alpha is very soothing (hence some guests become ‘**Alphaholics**’, attending the program over and over), and its therapy sessions can certainly change people, but true salvation is a great deal more than this.

THE DOCTRINES

In what ways, then, has the content of the program been made as ‘attractive’ – i.e. *inoffensive* – as possible? The following table identifies some of the topics raised during Alpha and allows us to compare various statements by Nicky Gumbel on these topics with the teaching of Holy Scripture...

⁷ Talk 8, Edition. 2.1. (‘Edition 2.1’ refers to the original Edition 2 Alpha video set. A later set was released, in transcript form, in the summer of 2000. All quotes in this booklet are from the later edition unless otherwise stated.)

Other Religions:

“Jesus said ‘I am the Way’ ... but it doesn’t mean to say you write off other religions ” ⁸	“The nations pray unto a god that cannot save” (Isa. 45:20); “[A]ll the gods of the nations are idols ” (Psa. 96:5).
“There is validity in pretty well all religions” ⁹	“[T]he Gentiles ... sacrifice to devils and not to God” (1 Cor. 10:20). Extra verses for many entries are in my footnotes.
“[T]here is only one source for all healing” ¹⁰ – <i>i.e. witchdoctors heal through God!</i>	“[F]alse Christs ... shall shew great signs and wonders” (Matt. 24:24). See also 2 Thess. 2:9; Mark 13:22; Exo. 8:6-7 etc.

Roman Catholicism:

Gumbel has read <i>Vatican II</i> , yet “he can find nothing wrong with it” ¹¹	“For by grace are ye saved ... Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). <i>See also footnote 11 below.</i>
“[T]here are 18 hundred million Christians ... today ” [Talk 14] – <i>i.e. every Roman Catholic is saved!</i>	“[N]arrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:14). See also vv22-23 and Matt. 22:14.
“ Peter of course was ... the one of whom Jesus said, ‘On this rock I will build my Church’” [Talk 12]	“[W]ho is a rock save our God? ” (Psa. 18:31); “[‘Peter’] is by interpretation [<i>just</i>] A [<i>moveable</i>] stone ” (John 1:42). See also Acts 4:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:11; & Eph. 2:19-20.

The Bible:

“There are moral problems with the Bible, there are [also] historical problems” [Talk 5]	“Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35); “The words of the LORD are pure words” (Psa. 12:6-7). See also John 17:17.
“God has given us his guide book” [Talk 5]	“[T]he things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:37). See also Psa. 19:7; 119:1ff etc.
“ Common sense [<i>rather than the Bible!</i>] is the way ... God will direct us over ... the big decisions” [Talk 7]	“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psa. 119:105). See also 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Gal. 4:30; & Acts 17:10-11.

⁸ Final part of *Alpha: Will It Change Their Lives?*, a UK TV series on ITV1, broadcast on 18:Nov:2001. Also c.f. 1 Cor. 10:14; Acts 4:10-12; Exo. 23:13; & Deut. 11:16-17.

⁹ *Ibid.* Also c.f. 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Deut. 8:19-20; 11:16-17; Psa. 106:35-37 etc.

¹⁰ *Searching Issues* (2001), p. 79. (HTB’s answer for seven objections to Christianity.) Note: All my book citations refer to UK editions unless a publisher’s name is given.

¹¹ Neil Richardson, *A Tale of Two Cities* (CWM, 2000), p. 29. Also c.f. Isa. 8:19-20; Gal. 2:16; 3:10-11; 4:9-11; 5:4,20-21; Eph. 2:8; 5:5; Rom. 3:20 etc.

Self-Esteem:

“Jesus ... made it possible for God to accept us **just as we are**”¹²

“God ... commandeth all men every where to **repent**” (Acts 17:30); “Ye **must** be born **again**” (John 3:7). See also Job 40:4a.

“[We] find **true** happiness ... [through] high **self-esteem**”¹³

“[T]he fruit of the Spirit is ... joy, ... [and] **Meekness**” (Gal. 5:22-23); “[Be] in **lowliness** of mind” (Php. 2:3). See also Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14b; & Rom. 12:3.

“**Jesus** sets us free ... to **love** ourselves in the sense of accepting ourselves **as we are**”¹⁴

“[I]n **me** (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth **no** good thing” (Rom. 7:18); “[B]e clothed with **humility**” (1 Pet. 5:5). See also 1 Tim. 1:15.

The Last Days:

“Satan ... [is] defeated ... and we are now involved in the final **mopping-up** operations”¹⁵

“[M]any false prophets ... shall deceive **many**. And because **iniquity** shall **abound**, the love of **many** shall wax cold” (Matt. 24:11-12). See also v5 & Mark 13:6-23!

“[T]he Church will be **unstoppable**”¹⁶ – *i.e. the Church will be like this before the Lord's return!*

“[I]t was given unto him [*i.e. the final Antichrist*] to make war with the saints, and to **overcome** them” (Rev. 13:7).

“[God is] concerned ... with the whole transformation of **society**” [Talk 12]

“Satan ... deceiveth the whole **world**” (Rev. 12:9); “[T]he world **passeth away**” (1 John 2:17). See also 2 Pet. 3:10-12 & Rev. 21:1.

Hell:

““Hell ... [is an] **empty town**”” [Talk 11]

“[W]hosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the **lake of fire**” (Rev. 20:15; see also 20:10 & 21:8).

““All hell is smaller than one **pebble** ... smaller than one **atom**”” [Talk 11]

“[B]road is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat” (Matt. 7:13). See also Matt. 20:16.

“[For] those who reject the gospel, it will be a **day** of destruction” [Talk 13] – *implying quick annihilation*

“[T]hese shall go away into **everlasting** punishment” (Matt. 25:46). See also Mark 9:43-48; Jude 1:7; Rev. 14:11; 20:10; 2 Thess. 1:7-9 etc.

¹² *30 Days* (2001), p. 31. Also c.f. Col. 3:3-4; Eph. 4:21-24; 2 Cor. 5:17; & Rom. 6:6.

¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 75-6. Also c.f. Jas. 4:16; Job 42:6; 1 Pet. 3:14; 4:14; 2 John 1:4; Luke 3:16.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 64. Also c.f. Acts 20:18-19; Rom. 5:15-18; 6:18-22; 7:24a; & John 15:5.

(All Bible quotations in my booklet are taken from the King James Version.)

¹⁵ *Questions of Life* (2001), p. 168. (“Alpha in book form”). Also c.f. 2 Tim. 3:13.

¹⁶ Talk 12, Edn. 2.1. Also c.f. Dan. 7:21,25; Matt. 24:1ff; 2 Thess. 2; & 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

The Church:

“[T]he Church is Christ” [Talk 14]	“[W]e are dust ” (Psa. 103:14). See also Eph. 5:23-24; 1:20-22; Isa. 64:6 etc.
“The Church is the [<i>i.e. not just a</i>] place ... where he [God] lives” ¹⁷	“[God] dwellest in the heavens ” (Psa. 123:1). See also Acts 7:47-50 & 1 Tim. 6:16.
“God’s ... plans for a united Christian universe are in the hands of the church ” ¹⁸	“[E]xcept those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved” (Matt. 24:22). See also Mark 13:8-13; 2 Thess. 2:7-12; 1:4-10; Rev. 13:1ff etc.

Unity:

“Methodist or ... Roman Catholic ... These are not the significant things” ¹⁹	“[E]arnestly contend for the faith [<i>singular</i>]” (Jude 3). “Can two walk together, except they be agreed ?” (Amos 3:3).
“[T]he movement of the Spirit will always bring churches together . He is doing that” ²⁰	“[W]hen He, the Spirit of truth , is come, He will guide you into all truth ” (John 16:13). See also John 4:23-24; 17:17-20; Eph. 5:5-9; 1 Tim. 1:3; & 2 Thess. 3:14.
“We can’t settle for anything less than the visible unity of the Church” [Talk 14]	“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth ” (3 John 1:4). See also 1 Cor. 5:11-13; Eph. 4:3-5; Prov. 23:3; 2 John 1:9-11; Zech. 8:19b etc.

Israel:

“[I]n Palestine , there is ... [Christ’s empty] grave” ²¹	“I shall bring you into the land of Israel ” (Ezek. 20:42). See also footnote 21.
“[T]he new Jerusalem’, that’s the Church ” [Talk 14]	“Boast not against the [natural] branches” (Rom. 11:18). See also Rev. 21:24-27.
“The first eleven chapters of Romans are all about what God has done for us ” [Talk 15] – <i>i.e. chapters 9, 10 & 11 are not about Israel!</i>	“I could wish that myself were accursed ... for my ... kinsmen according to the flesh: ... Israelites ” (Rom. 9:3-4). See also the rest of Romans 9-11.

¹⁷ Talk 14, Edn. 2.1. Also c.f. Psa. 2:4; 1 Ki. 8:27,30,39,43,49; 2 Chr. 30:27 etc.

¹⁸ *30 Days*, p. 52. (This book claims to be a “practical introduction to reading the Bible” but it actually undermines faith in the Bible.) Also c.f. Luke 17:26-30.

¹⁹ Talk 14, Edn. 2.1. Also c.f. 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rev. 21:8; & 22:14-15.

²⁰ Wallace Boulton, Ed., *The Impact of Toronto* (1995), p. 82. See also Luke 12:51.

²¹ *30 Days*, p. 75. (‘Palestine’ means ‘land of the **Philistines**’ and was employed by Israel’s enemies to dissociate the nation from the land God gave her.) Also c.f. Psa. 83:4; Judg. 13:5; Psa. 105:6ff; Gen. 48:4; Jer. 7:7; 30:3; Ezek. 36:28; 37:21-25 etc.

Fear of the Lord:

"[Adam] was afraid ... [of] God ... and that's not how it's meant to be" ²²	"Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear , and let Him be your dread " (Isa. 8:13). See also Job 28:28.
"Jesus set us free from ... all fear " [Talk 11]	"[Jesus said] Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into hell ; yea , I say unto you, Fear Him" (Luke 12:5).
"[W]e have nothing to fear" ²³	"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints" (Psa. 89:7a).

The Christian Life:

"[A] party ... This is a picture of the Christian life ... Don't miss out on the party " ²⁴	"[W]e must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22b). See also Matt. 16:24-25; 2 Cor. 4:8-11; 11:23-28; Mark 8:34-35; & Luke 9:23-24.
"It may involve some sacrifice ... [I]t may mean giving up things ... we know are wrong" ²⁵	"[W]hosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33). See also Gal. 5:24.
"God ... wants us to have fun " [Talk 5]	"I die daily" (1 Cor. 15:31b). See also 1 Cor. 4:11-13; 13:11; 15:19; Titus 1:16-2:4; Luke 6:25; Jas. 4:9; 1 Tim. 3:8; John 12:25 etc.

Jesus Christ:

"Jesus ... [is] not identical to God " ²⁶ – <i>rather than 'Jesus is not identical to His Father'</i>	"Emmanuel, ... being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23). See also Isa. 9:6; 44:6; John 1:1; 20:28; Heb. 1:8; & Php. 2:6.
"[W]hatever happens to Christ happens to you " [Talk 14]	" He is the head of the body, ... that in all things He might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18-19). See also 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 7:25-26; Rev. 4:10-11; 1:7-8; 14:7; & 15:3-4.
"Jesus himself is here right now ... [P]icture him ... standing in front of you" ²⁷	"[I]f any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not " (Matt. 24:23); "Thou shalt not ... set thee up any image" (Deut. 16:21-22).

²² Talk 11. Also c.f. Eccl. 12:13; Psa. 111:10; 147:11a; Prov. 1:7; Mal. 2:5 etc etc.

²³ *30 Days*, p. 46. Also c.f. Jer. 5:22; Job 37:22-24; Psa. 2:11-12; 34:9-11; 76:7-11; Deut. 5:29; 1 Sam. 12:24; Heb. 12:28-29; Acts 5:1-11; & 9:31 (plus footnote 22).

²⁴ *30 Days*, p. 37. Also c.f. Eph. 4:17-24; John 16:33; Eccl. 1:18; 7:4; & 1 Pet. 4:12-13.

²⁵ Talk 15. Also c.f. Php. 3:7-15; Heb. 12:14; Rom. 6:15ff; Rev. 2:1-5 etc.

²⁶ *Searching Issues*, p. 113. Also c.f. (in KJV): 1 John 3:16; 1 Tim. 3:16; & Acts 7:59.

²⁷ Talk 1, Edn. 2.1. Also c.f. Deut. 4:15-19; Col. 3:1; Acts 3:20-21; & Php. 3:20.

THE “AGE TO COME”

Sadly these tables only have space for a tiny fraction of the erroneous statements by Gumbel one could quote. (Hundreds of others are available in a book I've co-authored.²⁸) The tables also supply only a proportion of the scriptures that could be employed in challenging these errors (again, many others are presented in the aforementioned book). A more chilling observation still is that these statements by Nicky Gumbel are all in line with the beliefs of the *New Age* movement.²⁹

This apparent New Age slant is present within other facets of Alpha too.³⁰ For instance: the Course supports the New Age notion of baptismal regeneration; it also lends serious credence to the New Age view of Creation; and it often rejects the biblical position on gender, deferring instead to the androgynous stance of the New Age.

Further tables could have demonstrated the same New Age tendency in Alpha's teachings on issues like social action, or

²⁸ Page 12 of the booklet you are reading provides more information about this book, including some outlets.

²⁹ Please Note: In this booklet I have permitted some quotes from the older Alpha videos because those quotes still reflect Alpha's doctrine today and because I have never heard Nicky Gumbel apologize for any of them.

³⁰ The aforementioned book (referred to on page 12 of this booklet) documents numerous additional cases.

holy communion, or 'criticism', or Satan, or the Ascension... and so on.

Indeed, although the program includes a lot of mixture, if one studies the entire body of material offered by Alpha on *any* subject, proper examination reveals that it is significantly slanted towards the New Age position. (Even the discussions that follow each talk within the fifteen-session Course are regulated by New Age 'group consensus' techniques rather than Spirit-inspired preaching of the Word³¹ – hence Gumbel's espousal of New Age 'process' theology where being reborn is no longer an *event* but a "process ... a journey".³²)

THE SPIRIT

Some readers may feel led to argue that participants frequently have *Spirit*-given experiences during the Course. Various supernatural manifestations are certainly seen, and these are recorded in official publications from Alpha's home church – Holy Trinity, Brompton (HTB) in London. These include: • uncontrollable shaking / jerking • uncontrollable laughter • painful burning sensations • white 'lights' in the head • a voice in the head, and • electric shocks. Many Alpha supporters believe these experiences to be proof of baptism in the Holy Spirit – and therefore proof of salvation. There are at least five serious problems with this idea however...

³¹ To find out more, see chapter 16 of the book advertised on page 12.

³² Gumbel, final part of *Alpha: Will It Change Their Lives?* (op. cit.).

1) These manifestations often happen to participants **before** they ever make *any* commitment to God. (As with each of the other four problems discussed in this section, the book cited on page 12 of this booklet supplies a number of examples, two of which are offered below.) Since God's Holy Spirit is only ever given to *believers* (Acts 5:32), these testimonies from Alpha attendees cannot be referring to the genuine Spirit of God:

"I **had** to grab hold of both doors to stay upright ... I **felt the Spirit of God** and it was incredible. But ... I still **wasn't** a Christian"³³

"I had an **amazingly** powerful encounter with the Spirit, but ... went away **without** giving my life to Jesus" [*Alpha News*]³⁴

Indeed, some participants are so certain they were not saved at the time of these manifestations that they actually assume their experience *constituted* conversion:

"I felt an incredible tingling in the back of my neck ... **[S]uddenly** I had had this instant conversion"³⁵

This cannot be the Holy Spirit, since we are spiritually **dead** to God before we are converted (John 14:17; Gen. 2:17 etc).

³³ Mark Elsdon-Dew, Ed., *The God Who Changes Lives*, Vol. 2 (2001), p. 139. (An HTB book of Alpha testimonies.)

³⁴ *Alpha News*, Mar – Jun 1998, p. 4.

³⁵ *UK Focus*, (a supplement to HTB's *Focus* newspaper), Mar 1999, p. 2.

"It's not about what you **think** ... It's about **feelings** really ... All the ... **shaking** on that Saturday ... It just came over me"³⁶

2) The fruit of the Spirit of God includes self-control (Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 14:32), yet Alpha guests regularly describe their experiences as being uncontrollable (or even as being entirely unrelated to their emotions – unlike folks in, say, Jonathan Edwards' day, who trembled as a result of actual fear of God, or cried with relief because they knew real salvation). On Alpha Courses, many experiences have no apparent reason or purpose. Neither can they be stopped at will. This is not how a loving God relates to His servants in the Bible, yet Gumbel encourages the wrong view by describing the Holy Spirit as a "**controlling** Spirit".³⁷

"**[S]uddenly** ... I began to laugh **uncontrollably**" [*Alpha News*]³⁸

3) God's Spirit manifests to our *spirit*, not to our soul or body. His presence is therefore discerned *spiritually*. There is no case in Scripture of anyone feeling the Holy Spirit with the physical senses, but Alpha generates such testimonies:

"I felt a **physical** presence"³⁹

³⁶ Quoted in David Richardson, 'Alpha – the Omega in Evangelism?', *Prophecy Today*, Vol. 13, No. 5, p. 7.

³⁷ *Questions of Life*, p. 113.

³⁸ *Alpha News* #13, p. 9.

³⁹ Elsdon-Dew, Ed., *op. cit.*, p. 139. (See my co-authored book for more cases.)

“[The] Holy Spirit came ... It was a ... **physical** sensation”⁴⁰

4) The Alpha spirit seems as contagious as a highly communicable disease. This ‘catchability’ is simply not a feature of the genuine Holy Spirit. It is not possible to ‘catch’ holiness, although it is possible to catch **unholiness** (e.g. see Hag. 2:11-14; or Num. 19:11-22).

5) The manifestations listed earlier do not happen to God’s people in Scripture. (Gumbel surely knows this, because he attempts to justify these experiences by teaching, in Talk 8, that “the Holy Spirit wants to bring **new** things to the Church” – as if the Bible wasn’t complete, or God couldn’t write a Bible that was applicable today.) Such manifestations do, though, happen biblically to those folks who are *disobeying* God’s commands. (See for example Jer. 51:35-39 & vv51-58.)

Such manifestations also occur in *pagan* religions including New Age activities like Reiki therapy and Kundalini yoga. They are seen on Alpha because it teaches a different, non-fearsome ‘God’ from the true, and then encourages metaphysical techniques – including visualization – for accessing the spirit realm. A number of Gumbel’s books are even promoted on the basis that they are “metaphysical”.⁴¹

⁴⁰ *Alpha News*, Jul – Oct 1999, p. 11.

⁴¹ According to the *Observer* newspaper, “Gumbel’s combination of humour, ... **metaphysics** ... and complex theology are ... compelling”. This quote is part of an endorsement used on the back

THE ‘BLESSING’

Of course, these manifestations⁴² were also seen in the “Toronto Blessing” (TB) of the 1990s. (The book cited on page 12 discusses the ‘TB’ too.) HTB was a principal base for dispensing the Toronto spirit, and it openly promoted the ‘TB’ in Alpha’s original videos. The quote below confirms that the ‘Toronto’ spirit – and therefore the Alpha spirit – is New Age:

“Benjamin Crème [*a senior New Ager*] was recently asked what he thought of the **TB**. His response was that he thought the TB was a **good** thing: it is, according to him, the method being used by his spiritual Masters to **soften up** Christian Fundamentalists to accept the **New Age** Christ when he appears”⁴³

So, a New Ager praises the spirit behind Alpha. But what, if anything, does Alpha say about the so-called ‘dawning of the New Age’? Almost unbelievably, Nicky Gumbel employs this very terminology to describe the days before the coming of *his* Christ:⁴⁴

cover of Gumbel’s book *Questions of Life* (2001), as well as others. (Please Note: All newspapers referred to in the booklet you are reading are UK ones.)

⁴² See the book cited on page 12 for many documented quotes. (Since its initial release, that book has undergone great improvement, thanks to the Lord.)

⁴³ Dr. Nick Needham, ‘The Toronto Blessing’, Part 2, *The Shepherd*, Jan 1996 (Vol. XVI, No. 4).

⁴⁴ HTB utilizes a number of other New Age terms and phrases. For example,

“a **new age** would **dawn**” [Talk 13]

“There is also a present aspect of the Kingdom ... [T]he **dawning** ... of the Kingdom ... the **new age**”⁴⁵

“We live in the age of the **Spirit** [not the age of **Christ**?]” [Talk 8]. *To New Agers, ‘Aquarius’ represents the spirit, thus they would be very happy with the suggestion that we should move on from being **Christ-centred** and instead “live in the age of [Aquarius] the spirit”.*

THE ‘BOTTOM LINE’

The New Age ‘version’ of Christianity is the religion of Babylon in pseudo-biblical garb. Babylon’s religion was invented to be a subtle counterfeit of the true way to God, and to be popular and pleasing to the soul – just as we have now observed Alpha to be popular and pleasing to the soul. The ‘spiritual’ king of Babylon is *Lucifer*,⁴⁶ and senior New Agers today – including Benjamin Crème – admit that their religion is Luciferian. Since every significant aspect of the Alpha program leans toward the New Age, the dreadful implications are plain. (A less obvious, but similarly unavoidable, ramification is that Alpha *cannot* be safely adapted.)

THE PROBLEM

What is Alpha achieving? Readers must not imagine large numbers of people are being saved on Alpha. Of the hundreds

“As above, so below”; “new and coming one”, “mentor”, and “human potential”.

⁴⁵ Talk 13, Edn. 2.1.

⁴⁶ Isaiah 14:4-14 (KJV).

of testimonies my ministry partner and I have investigated, only a handful reflect **any** of the biblical hallmarks of authentic conversion. Similarly, readers ought not to view Alpha as ‘flawed but harmless’. It is deceiving the unsaved and is either: **(a)** turning them into false brothers who will persecute the genuine Church – i.e. those of us who remain true to the Bible – or, **(b)** making them seriously gospel-hardened. Either way, it is consigning them to a tormented future. (Tragically, it is deceiving many *believers* too – not least by encouraging them to accept the Antichrist and his system.) Finally I urge readers not to dismiss the Course as a passing fad. It has already been around for more than thirty years and has easily outlived most of the ‘new’ things coming into the Church over the last century.

THE SOLUTION

It is one thing to recognize the true spirit behind Alpha. It is another to recognize how people can be rescued from its grip. Some readers may be tempted to send this brief and uncompromising booklet to people involved with Alpha, but I would **beg** you not to do so – unless you know **beyond any doubt** that it is God’s will. Only *He* knows how to rescue a specific person at a given moment, so we need to seek Him for the right way to proceed. This is especially the case with Alpha, as we shall observe in a few moments. It is absolutely crucial not to act in our own strength or timing here...

You have coped with this booklet either because you know – and believe – your

Bible, or because you were already very dubious about Alpha and had heard of the perilous nature of these last days, or because you are *extraordinarily* open to correction. None of this is the case with Alpha's devotees. Even just the first two pages of this booklet would incense the vast majority of them – *and would cause them to stop reading and to harden their hearts rather than open up to you and to the help you can offer.*

These folks are not only terribly deceived and (generally) *very* closed to correction, but most have been spiritually 'blinded' such that they are effectively *unable* to discern the unvarnished truth when it is presented to them (see 2 Thess. 2:11-12). Beyond even this, these sincere but deluded souls already have a worldview that, to them, is perfectly consistent and reasonable. Their 'gospel' even comes complete with remarkable manifestations and various other 'signs and wonders' to confirm it (seemingly) as the truth...

Furthermore, because the worldview to which they hold predicts a great revival, *which they suppose Alpha to be helping produce*, the Course has now become a central part of their belief-system. These people would thus not have the slightest interest in something which criticised the program so openly. In the eyes of many, Alpha is a wonderful evangelistic Course which is saving souls all over the world and is therefore patently a gift from *God*. (How *dare* we so much as check Alpha is sound?!) The Alpha spirit is the same spirit lying behind the 'Toronto Blessing'

and it causes the same irrationality, even in the sanest people, when it is in danger of being exposed. For all these reasons, the *Lord God* has to be our guide when seeking to rescue such folks.

Alpha's supporters are usually unfamiliar with Scripture. They have certainly been taught an inconsistent – and thus false – interpretation of the Bible. Hence, if we are hasty in bringing correction, we will cause them massive confusion – since they will *know of no other foundation on which to stand*. God may well therefore require us to supply them an alternative worldview (i.e. the right one, which says the Church will *not* 'take the nations for Christ' during these last days) **before** we give them the hard facts about Alpha.

If a person firmly believes, as many do, that the Church is going to rule the world *prior* to the Lord returning and removing the final Antichrist (see 2 Thess. 2:8-9), it will be incomprehensible to that person for anyone to suggest Alpha is doing the very opposite and is leading churches all over the world into apostasy. It would be like trying to claim that the Lord Jesus is the Devil – and then expecting to receive a hearing. In other words, rescuing folks from the unclean spirit and adulterated teachings of Alpha is a very complex and delicate process requiring much prayer and care (Jude 1:20-25) because only the Lord knows how to reach a particular heart in these terrible circumstances.

Please see overleaf for a major aid in this situation.

THE END

For all the above reasons, I recommend obtaining a copy of the book I have co-authored. (*No royalties are accepted for it, despite the colossal amount of prayer, care and research behind its creation.*) It fully exposes Alpha, but it also provides the biblical answers to a large number of possible objections. Thanks to the Lord God alone, the book is structured so as not to require readers to pre-judge any issue, and it was written with both grace and sensitivity throughout. (It can also be deployed to help rescue people from

many *other* serious errors in the Church today beyond Alpha, including the topics listed in the tables earlier in this booklet.)

Below is a very small selection of outlets. Other stockists, plus further information about the main book (alongside details of how to access electronic and/or bound copies of *this booklet*), are available from the 'Rubies' portion of our website (i.e. bayith.org). May the Lord God bless you for your love of the truth.

Dusty Peterson

Some ways to obtain **Alpha – the Unofficial Guide: Overview**

As of June 2008

St Matthew Publishing 1 Barnfield, Common Lane Hemingford Abbots, Cambs, PE28 9AX, UK Tel: +44 1480 399 098	Sword Publishers P.O. Box 290, Redmond WA 98073-0290, USA jeandager@comcast.net www.swordpublishers.com	Christ The Way 43120 Eastwood Square Kitchener, ON, Canada Tel: +1 519 576 2600 info@christtheway.ca	Marg Godwin P.O. Box 112, Trafalgar Victoria 3824, Australia Tel: +61 3 5633 2300 marg@moriel.org
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Important closing notes

Readers are most welcome to copy and distribute this booklet *in its entirety* – but only for non-profit purposes (and only for those folks whom God specifically directs readers to, if pro-Alpha). Unfortunately, copying *parts* of this booklet is prohibited. This is necessary because, although the document you are reading was designed to inform mature believers about Alpha, it was also created as a vehicle for making known “Alpha - the Unofficial Guide”...

A truly gigantic amount of effort went into that volume, and I believe the Lord has enabled the result to be not only a sound treatment of Alpha, but also one which is proving capable of rescuing souls caught up in it. Selective copying of my *booklet* would thus undermine a primary purpose of it. Many thanks for understanding.

Incidentally, I strongly encourage you to read the ‘Overview’ volume yourself – for it provides crucial information seldom taught today, well beyond just Alpha. Reviewers have said:

“A great book ... A delight” (R.S. pastor)

“[This] will *really* help us” (C.R., UK)

“You bring up so many points that **no-one** addresses” (M.R., USA)

“Needs to be made available to as **many as possible**” (C.H., Scotland)

“The read has been **exquisite**” (V.C.)

“I can't say enough good things about it ... **Very powerful**” (S.D., USA)

I pray you will see much fruit from the book and from your godly work to get the truth known regarding this deadly Course.
James 5:19-20