

Twelve

Fractals, Chaos Theory, Quantum Spirituality, and *The Shack*

A fractal . . . something considered simple and orderly that is actually composed of repeated patterns no matter how magnified. A fractal is almost infinitely complex. I love fractals, so I put them everywhere.¹

—Sarayu, *The Shack*

Fractals reveal a hidden “order” underlying all seemingly chaotic events. The fractals are intricate and beautiful. They repeat basic patterns, but with an infinity of variations and forms. The world-view emerging from this scientific research is new, and yet at the same time very very ancient.²

—The Sovereign Court and
Order of the Ancient Dragon

Shortly after writing the previous two chapters on Leonard Sweet and quantum spirituality, I spoke at a church in Southern California. I had been asked to speak at the two morning services and then again in the evening. In the second morning service, three women approached me and thanked me for warning about the New Age/New Spirituality and how it was working its way into the church. All three told me they formerly attended Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church, but they had become dissatisfied

and left. They said it had been difficult to leave because so many of their friends still went to Saddleback.

After the evening service, two more women approached me with similar stories. One left Saddleback the previous year and the other had left a church she had been attending for over thirty-seven years. This second woman, Jennifer, had left because her former church was introducing a mixture of Purpose Driven, church growth, and emerging church teachings. She was following up on comments I made about William Paul Young’s *New York Times* best-selling book *The Shack*. I had described how *The Shack*’s author had introduced New Age concepts into his emotional novel about a man’s supposed encounter with “God,” “Jesus,” and the “Holy Spirit” after the brutal murder of his daughter. In the midst of his story, Young suddenly introduces the foundational teaching of the New Age/New Spirituality/New World Religion—that God is “in” everything. *The Shack*’s “Jesus” told Mack—the distraught father and main character in the novel—that God is “in” all things:

God, who is the ground of all being, dwells in,
around, and through all things.³

In speaking to the Southern California church, I had explained that the Bible makes it clear that God is not “in” all things. I explained that Satan—“the god of this world”—wants everyone to believe that God is “in” all things because then everyone would have reason to believe that they were God. When *The Shack*’s “Jesus” states that God is “in” all things, he actually reinforces what Rick Warren has already written in *The Purpose Driven Life*—that the Bible says God is “in” everything.⁴ In an online article I wrote titled “*The Shack* and its New Age Leaven,” I discuss this “God in everything” aspect.⁵

In our brief conversation, the second woman, Jennifer, told me she had discovered something interesting in *The Shack* and had written a short article about it. She asked if I would be willing to read her article. I told her I would.

Fractal Theory and *The Shack*

Back home a week later, I found Jennifer's paper in my notebook. I was intrigued by the title—"Fractal Theory in *The Shack*." In her article, Jennifer explains that during her research she had rented a DVD movie, which she had been told had New Age undertones. She then describes something she discovered in the movie:

In the movie *The Seeker* a young boy is a chosen one who is to find signs hidden throughout time, which will help fight against the encroaching darkness. I won't go into the plot too much but what I will say is, in the movie, each sign that the boy is to find is known as a fractal. When I heard the term fractal, right away I realized that I had heard that same term somewhere else recently. Later on that day I remembered where I had heard it, *The Shack*.

Beginning in chapter 9 in *The Shack* which is titled, "A Long Time Ago in a Garden Far, Far Away," we read about how Sarayu (who represents the Holy Spirit) has created a garden and we learn that the garden is a fractal. We learn about fractals from Sarayu when she says, "A fractal is something considered simple and orderly that is actually composed of repeated patterns no matter how magnified. A fractal is almost infinitely complex. I love fractals, so I put them everywhere."⁶

Curious about the term "fractal" that was showing up in both *The Shack* and *The Seeker*, Jennifer did some research. What she discovered is that the term "fractal" is directly related to what are being called the "new sciences" of "Chaos Theory" and "Fractal Theory." What was of particular interest to me was her finding that fractals are directly linked with the occult phrase "as above, so below"—the same occult/New Age term that Eugene Peterson had mysteriously inserted into his paraphrase of the Lord's

Prayer. And now, here was Peterson’s endorsement prominently featured on the front cover of *The Shack*. Given my previously expressed concern about Peterson’s use of “as above, so below” in *The Message*, I found it interesting that “as above, so below” was apparently related to the term fractal in *The Shack* and that Peterson had so enthusiastically endorsed the book.

As Above, So Below and Fractals

After reading Jennifer’s article, I made sure a copy was sent to the Indiana pastor who had sent me the articles regarding Norman Vincent Peale. Because he had been currently writing articles exposing *The Shack*’s errant theology, I knew he would be interested in Jennifer’s article—how she had discovered a direct link between *The Shack*’s multiple references to fractals and the New Age term “as above, so below.”⁷

Later, as we talked by phone, the pastor searched the Internet for the word “fractal.” The first website listed was called “Fractal Wisdom.” The site featured an article titled “Fractal Chaos Crashes the Wall between Science and Religion.”⁸ Under that heading was a box containing a fractal design, and underneath the fractal was the saying “As Above, So Below.” Underneath the occult saying was a quote from New Age pioneer and mystic Aldous Huxley—the single most quoted person in Marilyn Ferguson’s best-selling New Age book *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. Huxley is also quoted by Rick Warren in *The Purpose Driven Life*.⁹ Huxley’s quote on the Fractal Wisdom website addresses the dual subjects of chaos and “purpose”:

At any given moment, life is completely senseless.
But viewed over a period, it seems to reveal itself
as an organism existing in time, having a purpose,
trending in a certain direction.¹⁰

The online article titled “Fractal Chaos Crashes the Wall Between Science and Religion” goes on to state:

New discoveries in the science and mathematics of Chaos research are revolutionizing our world view. They reveal a hidden fractal order underlying all seemingly chaotic events. The fractals are intricate and beautiful. They repeat basic patterns, but with an infinity of variations and forms. The world-view emerging from this scientific research is new, and yet at the same time ancient. With a little thought, and the help of this web, you can better understand the significance of Chaos and Fractals. You can see how to use these insights in your life to create a bridge between Science and Spirituality.¹¹

As the mystic sages of long ago put it, “as above, so below.”¹²

But what is being presented as “science” is actually an occult/New Age worldview, which presents the New Age belief that much of the “chaos” in the world is the result of people not properly perceiving the “interconnectedness” of all things. In other words, what appears to be “chaos” is often just “the observer” not seeing the “as above, so below”/God “in” everything/“fractal order” that defines all creation. This postulated fractal order is directly related to Teilhard de Chardin, Matthew Fox, and Leonard Sweet’s quantum spirituality/Creation Spirituality. *The Shack*’s references to fractals—references I had overlooked when I first read the book—immediately explain why author William Young capitalizes the letter “C” in the word “Creation” at least twenty times in *The Shack*. The capital “C” reflects what his “Jesus” is teaching—that God is “in” all things—including “Creation.”

From the perspective of the New Age/New Spirituality, it makes perfect sense that *The Shack*’s “Jesus” states that God is “in” all things. Mack—the main character—is seeing his life as “a mess” rather than as a “fractal” part of “God.” This is because he is not seeing the “as above, so below” fractal order of “God in all things.” From this perspective, it also makes perfect sense that *The*

Shack’s “Holy Spirit” told Mack that his life only seems chaotic and “a mess”—that in reality, he was actually “a living fractal.”¹³

From this “Fractal Wisdom” website, I could see the deceptive New Age ploy regarding the word fractal and its relationship to “as above, so below.” If all of capital “C” Creation is “God” and thus composed of “God” atoms and energy, then any fractal part of that “God” energy is therefore a part of God. Man is a fractal. Man is God. That is why Mack is told he is “a living fractal.” That is why Mack is told that God is “in” all things.¹⁴ The word fractal is being used as a pseudo-scientific synonym for the belief that God is “in” everything—everything being a fractal or a fractured part of the whole, a fractured part of God. Taken a step further, *The Shack* is indirectly presenting the notion that “chaos” is simply the result of people not seeing the “God in everything” fractal order in the world—“as above, so below.”

Thus, *The Shack*—like Leonard Sweet’s quantum spirituality—subtly introduces the New Age/New Spirituality as a worldview that puts forth the notion that “chaos” can be significantly overcome when humanity stops seeing itself as “separate”¹⁵ but rather sees itself as “One”—as a part of the “God” who is “in” everyone and everything. However, the Bible teaches that humanity is not “God” or “One” with God (John 2:24-25; Ezekiel 28:2; Hosea 11:9, etc.). The Bible teaches just the opposite—that man is actually separated from God by sin (Isaiah 59:2). It is because of this “separation” that we need to acknowledge our sin and repent (Acts 2:38). Everyone must be born again (John 3:6-7)—born again from the God who is “above” (John 3:31), and not “below.” Born again from the one true God—not by the “as above, so below” god that the Apostle Paul described as “the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). The Bible states that we are only “one” in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). And we are only “one” in Christ Jesus when we repent of our sins and accept His death on the cross for our sins (1 John 2:2)—his finished work on the cross of Calvary (Colossians 1:20).

“Chaos” is not created or furthered by humanity’s denial of its so-called fractal divinity. The truth of the matter is that man is not divine—man is not God. Rather, “chaos” is the consequence of Adam’s fall resulting in sinfulness and the subsequent decay of all things and our separation from a holy God. It is not “as above, so below.” Fractals do not point the way to salvation. Genesis 11:6-8 warns about a deceptive and spiritually dangerous imagined “oneness”:

And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Acts 17:26 informs us that humanity is “one blood” and that we are connected to one another in that way. But humanity is not one Spirit. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). The Bible states that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50). Jesus said, we “must be born again” (John 3:7).

God’s creation is indeed intricate and wondrous. And in many countless ways it is beautifully and harmoniously interconnected—but it is not divine (Romans 1:25). Man is “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14), but he is not a part of some divine fractal order. We are sinners and we need to be saved from the sin that separates us from God. It is as simple as that. Repenting and accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and as the one and only Savior who saves us from our sins is the “narrow” and only way to eternal salvation (John 14:6; Matthew 7:13-14). The introduction of fractals in the story line of *The Shack* is a deceptive device to unsuspecting readers. It was an entry point into the pseudo-scientific notion of “fractal Oneness”—“as above, so below”/God “in” everything.

Bruce Lipton and As Above, So Below

Another reference to fractals and “as above, so below” was in a book titled *The Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter & Miracles*. It was written by a Ph.D research scientist named Bruce H. Lipton. Lipton’s book contains several passages where the author connects “as above, so below” not only to fractals, but also to quantum physics. This immediately clarifies what Leonard Sweet is doing in his book *Quantum Spirituality*. He is introducing the church to New Age quantum physics. It also probably clarifies why Eugene Peterson was led to insert “as above, so below” into the Lord’s Prayer and why *The Shack* carries Peterson’s endorsement on its front cover. *The Shack* is obviously a transformational device to slowly convert the reader to a new worldview based on a misapplication of quantum physics—the New Age/New Spirituality.

In an interview with Bruce Lipton, Lipton states that fractals are part of the “new math” that is the science behind the God “in” everything saying “as above, so below.” He says:

Inherent in the geometry of fractals is the creation of ever-repeating, “self-similar” patterns nesting within one another. You can get a rough idea of “repeating shapes” by picturing the popular toy, hand-painted Russian nesting dolls. Each smaller doll (structure) is a miniature, but not necessarily an exact version of the larger doll (form). This new math is the science behind the old saying, “As above, so below.”¹⁶

I could see that Lipton’s discussion of fractals, quantum physics, and cellular biology neatly dovetails with [New Age follower] David Spangler’s teachings on the cell and the New Age. Lipton’s remarks also mesh with Leonard Sweet’s “new cell theory” that is so integral to his quantum spirituality. Lipton states:

In a fractal Nature, the appearances of structures

at any level of organization are “self-similar” to the structures found in higher or lower levels of organization. Therefore a fractal understanding of the organization at one level is applicable to understanding an organization at another level. When applied to the new biology, this new math reveals that a cell, a human and human civilization are “self-similar” images at different levels of organization. So by studying a cell, one can learn about a human. In studying the community of cells in a human body, one can learn the nature of forming a successful community of humans that form the larger organism, humanity. Perhaps we will find the answers to saving civilization through a study of the very successful cellular civilizations beneath our skin.¹⁷

After reading this, I reread the following from David Spangler’s *The Reimagination of the World*:

To me, a more appropriate symbol for the New Age is the cell. The cell is really a living crystal. It possesses a highly structured internal order, yet this geometry is organized around information rather than around position, as in a crystal lattice. Protoplasm is highly dynamic; it can give birth to endless varieties of new life, yet it can also collect and focus energy in powerful ways. If we want to possess a magical crystal for our New Age work, we need look no further than our own bodies and the cells that make them up.¹⁸

I then reread how Leonard Sweet thanked David Spangler for helping him formulate his “new cell” understanding of New Light Leadership:

I am grateful to David Spangler for his help in formulating this “new cell” understanding of New Light leadership.¹⁹

I could see where all of this cellular discussion was going. Teilhard de Chardin, Matthew Fox, Leonard Sweet, and others with New Age affections are teaching the world and the church that God is “in” every atom—therefore God is “in” everything—therefore we are all One—“As above, so below.” But in the Bible, the apostle Paul made it very clear to the Greek unbelievers on Mars Hill that while humanity shares one blood (Acts 17:26)—and all the cellular similarity that infers—humanity is still in need of a Savior. Sharing one blood implies a physical “oneness”—if you will—through our original parents, Adam and Eve. But Paul made it very clear that there is no spiritual oneness. After telling the Greeks that they shared one blood, he then told them about Jesus Christ. In Acts 17:31, in referring to God and Jesus Christ, he says:

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

In Galatians 3:28, Paul clarifies that while we all share one blood with similar cellular composition, we are only one in Jesus Christ:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Being one in Jesus Christ is not an automatic, universal oneness as Leonard Sweet in *Quantum Spirituality* and William Young in *The Shack* seem to suggest. Paul makes it very clear in Romans that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and when we accept and follow Him as our Savior, we are saved and set free from our sin:

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God has

set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. (Romans 3:23-24)

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (Romans 5:6)

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. (Romans 8:1)

Anticipating things like quantum physics and quantum spirituality, Paul warned Timothy not to become spiritually compromised by pseudo-scientific teachings—science falsely so-called.

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. (1 Timothy 6:20)

Paul also warned Timothy there would come a time when men would follow false teachers who would turn them away from the one true God with their fractals and their fables—men like William Young and his book *The Shack*:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke,

exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:1-4)

Exploring Off the Map

When Rick Warren endorsed colleague Bob Buford’s book *Halftime* (a book dedicated to Peter Drucker), Warren said, “I want every man in my congregation to read this inspiring story!”²⁰ It was Buford, along with Norman Vincent Peale and others, who initially influenced Ken Blanchard with regard to the Lord. And it was Buford’s Leadership Network that gave birth to the present-day emerging church movement and emerging leaders like Brian McLaren, Doug Pagitt, and Tony Jones. In May 2000, Leadership Network sponsored a conference titled “Exploring Off the Map.” *Quantum Spirituality* author Leonard Sweet was a featured speaker at this conference with New Age sympathizers Ken Blanchard, Peter Senge, Margaret Wheatley, and others. Disregarding the certainty of God-given prophecy in Scripture, Leadership Network was determined to provide a more optimistic, user-friendly “map” to the future. For the conference, Sweet was given the lead role of Chief Scout.²¹

Margaret Wheatley, like Leonard Sweet, had been heavily influenced by quantum physics and the New Age. She was selected by New Age Marianne Williamson to write the last chapter for the book *Imagine: What America Could Be in the 21st Century: Visions of a Better Future from Leading American Thinkers*. This book is replete with articles by New Age authors and teachers like Deepak Chopra, Neale Donald Walsch, Barbara Marx Hubbard, and others. “Exploring off the Map” speaker Peter Senge also wrote a chapter for this New Age book that was being used as a fundraiser for the Global Renaissance Alliance of New Age leaders.²²

In the 2006 updated version of her 1992 book *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World*, Margaret Wheatley echoes the theme of the May 2000 Leadership Network Conference—“Exploring Off the Map.” In her prologue titled “Maps to the Real World,” we read:

I have always thought of this book as a collection of intriguing maps, much like those used by the early explorers when they voyaged in search of new lands.²³

It seems quite apparent that Wheatley’s book *Leadership and the New Science* was the inspiration for the Leadership Network conference. She writes:

In 1990, as I began to apply the new sciences to the challenges of leadership, I noted that “we live in a time of chaos, as rich in the potential for disaster as for new possibilities. . . .”

Chaos and global interconnectedness are part of our daily lives

It’s time to realize that we will never cope with this new world using our old maps. It is our fundamental way of interpreting the world—our worldview—that must change.²⁴

Whatever your personal beliefs and experiences, I invite you to consider that we need a new worldview to navigate this chaotic time.²⁵

Margaret Wheatley goes on to describe how “Quantum physics challenges our thinking about observation and perception, participation and relationships, and the influences and connections that work across large and complex systems.”²⁶

She then introduces readers to “Chaos Theory” and “fractals.” She states:

Chaos is a necessary process for the creation of new order. . . . I also explore lessons to be learned from fractals—how nature creates its diverse and intricate patterns by the presence of a few basic principles.²⁷

Wheatley explains that the first book she ever read on the “new science” was written by Fritjof Capra—the New Age physicist who wrote *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism*. Wheatley writes:

I opened my first book on the new science—Fritjof Capra’s *The Turning Point*, which describes the new world view emerging from quantum physics. This provided my first glimpse of a new way of perceiving the world, one that comprehended its processes of change, its deeply patterned nature, and its dense webs of connections.²⁸

Emerging church leader Brian McLaren, in his book *The Church on the Other Side*, cites Margaret Wheatley and calls *Leadership and the New Science* an “inspiring book.”²⁹ Commenting on an anecdote from her book, McLaren mentions the emergence of “quantum theory” to help people “cope with subatomic reality.”³⁰ Several paragraphs after McLaren’s reference to “quantum theory,” he identifies Rick Warren as one of the “gifted leaders and wise writers” who is “helping us” to see where we need to go in the future.³¹ Shortly after that, in his book, McLaren refers to the “Quantum leaps” that are moving us rapidly from one change to another. He explains:

We live in a time unlike any other time that any living person has known. It’s not merely that things are changing. Change itself has changed,

thereby changing the rules by which we live. . . . [T]here is more to this change than simply a linear extrapolation of rapid change and complexity. Quantum leaps are happening that are nothing like evolution. They remove us almost totally from our previous context.³²

It is not at all surprising that those with New Age affections, like Leonard Sweet, Margaret Wheatley, Ken Blanchard, and Peter Senge, are integral parts of a conference titled “Exploring Off the Map.” And it is not that surprising that emerging church leader Brian McLaren introduces Wheatley’s book *Leadership and the New Science* and quantum physics into his writings. It seems clear that Leadership Network, with its ensemble of New Age sympathizers, is mapping out a more “positive” future for the church—one in which New Age quantum physics will be the definitive map—not the *Holy Bible*. Is it a coincidence that *The Shack*’s main character, McKenzie Allen Phillips, has the initials M.A.P.? Maybe so. But certainly, *The Shack* when compared to the Bible is definitely “exploring off the map.”

At the end of the posted online summary of the May 2000 “Exploring Off the Map” conference, several Leadership Network events were listed. Included on the list was a conference in Orlando, Florida that featured Rick Warren as the main speaker.³³ It would not be surprising if we were to find out that Warren had attended the “Exploring Off the Map” conference with Leonard Sweet and the others. Whatever the case, Rick Warren is no stranger to Bob Buford and the Leadership Network.³⁴

The Quantum Revolution

Later, in following up on Bruce Lipton, I read his book *The Biology of Belief*. In my reading, I noticed that Lipton uses the term “quantum revolution” to describe the mounting enthusiasm building around quantum physics, the new biology, and the new worldview.³⁵ This seems to dovetail with the “new revolution”³⁶ author William

Young’s narrator “Willie” advocated at the very end of *The Shack*. The author’s enthusiastic call for a “new revolution” seems to be predicated on his earlier references to fractals,³⁷ science,³⁸ and “the quantum stuff that is going on at a subatomic level.”³⁹ In other words, the new worldview—“God is “in” everything—“as above, so below.” One thing is for sure—William Young’s *The Shack* meshes perfectly with Leonard Sweet’s quantum revolution and quantum spirituality. Is this “quantum revolution” the same “revolution” Rick Warren referred to when he turned to Ken Blanchard at the Birmingham Lead Like Jesus conference and said, “You know, Ken, let’s start a revolution.”⁴⁰ Is this the “revolution” Warren claims will “change the world” and “change history”?⁴¹ Is this “quantum revolution” the same “revolution” Brian McLaren, Erwin McManus, Shane Claiborne, and other emerging church leaders also refer to in their writings?⁴² Time will tell.

It seems clear to me that quantum physics, the “new” biology, and the “new” math of fractal geometry are being used to provide a seemingly scientific basis for “proving” the “as above, so below” contention that God is “in” everything. We are being asked to believe that all of creation is an interconnected quantum field of energy and “oneness” that is “God.” We are told that humanity will only survive and have a “positive future” if we recognize and play our part—as “God”—in this interconnected quantum “Field of Dreams.” Rick Warren says “if you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission.”⁴³ In other words—“If you build it, he will come.”⁴⁴ New Age matriarch Alice Bailey said, “His coming depends upon our work.”⁴⁵ This sounds like Warren’s P.E.A.C.E. Plan. And this sounds like Neale Donald Walsch’s New Age PEACE Plan. As discussed at length in *Reinventing Jesus Christ* and *Deceived on Purpose*,⁴⁶ this is also the Peace Plan of the false Christ Maitreya—the New Age “Christ” who claims to already be here on earth waiting to be called forth—“If you build it, he will come.” But the two big questions are: what God are we really talking about, and if we build it who is actually coming? Jesus Christ or Antichrist?

These PEACE Plans have something in common that unites them on a vital level—mysticism. Even Rick Warren promotes the same mystical spirituality that underlies the other plans. Warren sees Richard Foster’s “spiritual formation” movement (i.e., contemplative spirituality) as a “valid message for the church” today.⁴⁷ But when one looks at Foster’s spiritual formation, we see that the people he has drawn from support the very same view of God as Neale Donald Walsch and Alice Bailey. For instance, Foster often turns to the writings of Thomas Merton who says: “True solitude is a participation in the solitariness of God—Who is in all things.”⁴⁸ Foster also draws from the late Catholic contemplative Basil Pennington, who expresses his God in everything views when he says that all religions “experience a deep unity” during meditation because “there is only one God to be experienced.”⁴⁹ Foster’s “spiritual formation” that Warren calls a “wake-up call” for “the body of Christ”⁵⁰ can be summed up in Tilden Edwards, whom Foster highly recommends, when Edwards states: “This mystical stream is the Western bridge to Far Eastern spirituality.”⁵¹

“God’s Dream” and Metaphysics

It seems that Leonard Sweet has a special role—much like Robert Schuller—to create a bridge from the church to the New Age/New Spirituality. It is not surprising that Sweet has been helped along and promoted by Schuller. Sweet is also promoted by a number of other church leaders including Rick Warren. In his 1999 book *SoulTsunami*, Sweet talks all about “God’s Dream.”⁵² He also states that “physics is becoming metaphysics.”⁵³ But it is not “God’s Dream” that we accept this new worldview suggested by quantum physics and Sweet’s New Age/quantum spirituality. God is not “in” everything and God does not dream. But rather God exposes false teachings and deceptive devices like the term “God’s Dream.”

Leonard Sweet’s notion that “physics is becoming metaphysics” is similarly presented in an article titled, “As Above; So Below: The Mysteries of Quantum Metaphysics” by Richard and Iona

Miller.⁵⁴ Sweet’s metaphysical/New Age statement is further underscored and exposed in an article written by Donald J. DeGracia Ph.D. who states that chaos, fractals, and quantum theory are intimately linked with the occult. In “Beyond The Physical: A Synthesis of Science and Occultism in Light of Fractals, Chaos, and Quantum Theory,” DeGracia writes:

Chaos, Fractals and Quantum Theory . . . These three branches of science contain principles identical to those found in occultism.⁵⁵

Landscheidt uses the ancient occult notion “as above, so below” (the Hermetic Axiom) to show how solar activities correlate with terrestrial activities. This research is a clear illustration of what I call the principle of the “Self-similarity of Nature,” which means that the same principle of organization operates at different scales of Nature. This work also illustrates the compatibility of fractal and occult notions.⁵⁶

After reading additional material related to fractals and quantum physics, I called Jennifer and thanked her for writing her article. I told her it had been very revealing and helpful. In another conversation with her, she added an interesting footnote to this whole subject of quantum physics and fractals. She informed me that Leonard Sweet had co-authored a book with emerging church leader Brian McLaren and Jerry Haselmayer titled *A is For Abductive: The Language of the Emerging Church*. The book is an alphabetized listing of various terms that have special significance to the emerging church. Under the letter “F” there is an entry for fractals, defining fractals as “The way in which the whole is replicated in miniature in every part.”⁵⁷ In other words, “as above, so below”—God is “in” everything.

New Age “Oneness”

In the book *From the Ashes: A Spiritual Response to the Attack on America*, a cross-section of New Age and religious leaders (one of whom was Rick Warren) wrote various articles to encourage people after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. In an effort to create “order out of chaos,” Neale Donald Walsch’s article in that book challenges New Age and religious leaders everywhere to help save the world by preaching the New Age message that “we are all one.” If everyone accepts this message, Walsch promises that “everything could change overnight.” He explains:

We must change ourselves. We must change the beliefs upon which our behaviors are based. We must create a different reality, build a new society . . . We must do so with new spiritual truths. We must preach a new gospel, its healing message summarized in two sentences:

*We are all one.
Ours is not a better way, ours is merely another way.*

This 15-word message, delivered from every lectern and pulpit, from every rostrum and platform, could change everything overnight. I challenge every priest, every minister, every rabbi and religious cleric to preach this.⁵⁸

But Walsch’s New Age “God” has made it clear that “we are all one” because God is “in” everything. In prior books, Walsch quotes his “God” as saying:

God is creation.⁵⁹

You are the Creator and the Created.⁶⁰

You are *already* a God. You simply do not know it.⁶¹

You are One with everyone and everything in the Universe—including God.⁶²

There is only One of Us. You and I are One.⁶³

As previously mentioned, this is essentially the same God “in” everything statement that can be found in *The Shack*,⁶⁴ *The Purpose Driven Life*,⁶⁵ and the *The Message*.⁶⁶ Whether they realize it or not, all three of these men—William Young, Rick Warren, and Eugene Peterson—are giving Neale Donald Walsch and his New Age “God” exactly what they want. Eugene Peterson has even taken the “as above, so below” God “in” everything statement he put in the Lord’s Prayer to its logical New Age conclusion by paraphrasing Ephesians 4:6 to read—“Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.”⁶⁷

An interesting footnote: *The Shack*’s author William Young has actually stated online that the conversations of his characters in *The Shack* reflect actual “conversations” he has had with “God.”⁶⁸ He says his novel is only a novel in that he put what “God” told him into a fictional story context. In other words, statements such as “God, who is the ground of all being, dwells in, around, and through all things” and references to “fractals” and “the quantum stuff that is going on at a sub-atomic level” are teachings that evolved from the “conversations” Young claims to have had with “God.” Young wrote that he had originally wanted to title his book *Conversations with God* until he found out that someone else (Neale Donald Walsch) had already written books with that same title.⁶⁹

Ironically, William Young actually has much in common with Neale Donald Walsch. Not only do they both say they have had real “conversations” with “God” and written about those “conversations,” but their “conversations” present many of the same New Age/New Spirituality teachings. All of this begs the question—just what “God” did William Young converse with? It is safe to assume that the “God” that Young spoke with

is, in fact, the same “God” that Neale Donald Walsch spoke with in his “conversations.” And this “God” is not the God of the Holy Bible but rather the “God” of the New Age/New Spirituality—the “God” the apostle Paul refers to with a small “g” as the “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4) who is, of course, the one that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, identifies as Satan.

Hidden in Plain Sight

I eventually rented the New Age movie that Jennifer refers to in her article and watched it for myself. In *The Seeker*, Will is a young boy who tries to save the world by finding the signs or “fractals” that have been hidden throughout time. At one point in the movie, Will and Merriman (one of the wise “Old Ones”) have the following interchange:

Will: Okay. Look at this. This pattern is a fractal. Its physics—My dad teaches this stuff. Like-like a hiding place that goes on and on forever.

Merriman: Like a clue hidden in plain sight that declares the presence of a sign.⁷⁰

Reflecting on what Merriman said, I had to ask myself—was Eugene Peterson’s insertion of “as above, so below” into the Lord’s Prayer in *The Message* like a New Age “fractal”—“a clue hidden in plain sight”? Was “as above, so below” in *The Message* a “clue” that would one day be regarded as a prophetic sign, like one of the hidden signs in the movie *The Seeker*? Would “as above, so below” be regarded in a New Age future as a fractal “message” from God—“the message” that was in *The Message*? Would this “as above, so below,” God “in” everything fractal “message” of “oneness” be seen as the key to saving the world—just like the fractals in *The Seeker* and just as New Age leaders like Neale Donald Walsch are telling everybody? And would the “God in everything” quotes

by Rick Warren in *The Purpose Driven Life*, by Leonard Sweet in *Quantum Spirituality*, and by William Young’s “Jesus” in *The Shack* also be regarded one day as fractal clues that had been “hidden in plain sight” in their writings? Were these men all playing their unwitting part in the spiritual deception that Jesus warned would come in His name before His return when He stated, “Take heed that no man deceive you” (Matthew 24:4)?

One thing is for sure: God’s true Holy Spirit would never inspire Eugene Peterson, Rick Warren, Leonard Sweet, William Young, or anyone else to put this “as above, so below,” “God in everything,” occultic (hidden) message teaching in any book that purposed to have anything to do with the one true God and His one true son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

A Stay-at-Home Mom

Jennifer, a stay-at-home mom, home schooling her fourteen year-old daughter, had done her homework. Her research had provided me with new insights regarding fractals, quantum physics, and their direct connection with the occult/New Age term “as above, so below.” While Jennifer’s insights about fractals and “as above, so below” had exposed an important New Age aspect of *The Shack*, it also helped to further expose Leonard Sweet’s book *Quantum Spirituality* and the further New Age implications of Rick Warren’s Purpose Driven movement.

Because of Jennifer’s article, I had remembered Fritjof Capra’s 1975 book *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism*. It had been a cult classic when I was in the New Age movement many years ago. We had all been ready to take that big “quantum leap” into a peaceful New Age future when all the world would be as “One.” Were books like Leonard Sweet’s *Quantum Spirituality* and William Young’s *The Shack* preparing the church to take that same quantum leap? All signs and fractals seemed to be pointing that way.

The New Age Implications of *The Shack*

New Age Belief

God is the ground of all being—
God is “in” all things.

God indwells creation, therefore
the word creation is frequently
spelled with a capital “C.”

Evil, darkness, Satan have no
actual existence.

Quantum Physics, chaos theory,
fractal theory deceptively used by
New Age and the Occult to try to
scientifically “prove” that God is
“in” everything because God is
allegedly “in” every atom.

Bible is not inerrant and reliable.
Mystical spiritual “experiences”
with “God” are more authorita-
tive—even if they conflict with
Scripture.

The Shack

“God,” who is the ground of all be-
ing, dwells in, around, and through
all things (p. 112).*

The word creation is spelled with
a capital “C” over twenty times.

“Evil and darkness . . . do not
have any actual existence” (p. 136).
Satan is never mentioned.

Subtly introduces quantum physics,
chaos theory, fractal theory through
references to “quantum stuff” (p.
95), “sub-atomic level” (p. 95),
“chaos” (p. 128), and fractals (p. 129)
while simultaneously teaching that
God is “in” everything—including
every atom (p. 112).

The Bible is consistently devalued
and marginalized. Mystical spiri-
tual experiences with “God” more
authoritative—even if they conflict
with Scripture.

**The Shack* is described in the premier issue of Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven Connection* magazine as one of the “notable best-selling Christian books in 2008,” and, as of this writing, it is being sold on the Purpose Driven Connection website: <http://shop.purposedriven.com/TheShack/A/0964729237.htm>.

ENDNOTES

12/Fractals, Chaos Theory, Quantum Spirituality, and *The Shack*

1. William P. Young, *The Shack: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity* (Newbury Park, CA: Windblown Media, 2007), p. 129.

2. The Matrix@dragoncourt.net (<http://www.dragoncourt.net/06.html>)

3. William P. Young, *The Shack*, op. cit., p. 112.

4. Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, op. cit., p. 88.

5. Warren Smith, "The Shack and its New Age Leaven" (posted at: <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2008/06/shack-its-new-age-leaven.html>).

6. Jennifer Pekich, "Fractal Theory in *The Shack*" (unpublished article; used with author's permission), quoting in part from: *The Shack*, op. cit., p. 129.

7. Referring to Pastor Larry DeBruyn, Franklin Road Baptist Church: <http://www.frbaptist.org>.

8. "Fractal Chaos Crashes the Wall between Science and Religion," <http://www.fractalwisdom.com>.

9. Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, op. cit., p. 248, quoted in: Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, op. cit., pp. 108-109.

10. "Fractal Chaos Crashes the Wall Between Science and Religion," (Fractal Wisdom website, <http://www.fractalwisdom.com/FractalWisdom/index.html>), quoting Aldous Huxley.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. William P. Young, *The Shack*, op. cit., p. 138.

14. Ibid., p. 112.

15. For a more complete explanation of separation versus oneness see Chapter 9, "The 'New Gospel' Doctrine of Separation" in *Reinventing Jesus Christ: The New Gospel* at <http://www.deceivedonpurpose.com>.

16. Monica Tarantino & Eduardo Araia-Part 2 of 3, an interview with Bruce H. Lipton, Ph.D. (http://spiritcrossing.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=550&itemid=0).

17. Ibid.

18. David Spangler and William Irwin Thompson, *Reimagination of the World*, op. cit., p. 62.

19. Leonard Sweet, *Quantum Spirituality*, op. cit., p. 312, #86.

20. Rick Warren's endorsement of Bob Buford's book *Halftime* sits on the 2nd page of endorsements inside the front cover of *Halftime* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994). For more information about the role

Buford and the Leadership Network have played in bringing the New Spirituality into the church, read *Faith Undone: the emerging church—a new reformation or an end-time deception* by Roger Oakland (Silverton, OR: Lighthouse Trails Publishing, 2007), chapter 2; also see Discernment Research Group at <http://herescope.blogspot.com>.

21. For “Exploring Off the Map” information at Leadership Network’s website: http://www.leadnet.org/epubarchive.asp?id=30&db=archive_explorer; also see: “Earth: the Old Story, the New Story” by Discernment Research Group for documentation on the “Exploring Off the Map” conference: Kjos Ministries, <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/08/discernment/5-29-earth-newstory.html>.

22. Global Renaissance Alliance, edited by Marianne Williamson, *Imagine: what America Could Be in the 21st Century* (Rodale, Inc, 2000), Margaret Wheatley’s chapter titled, “The Future.”

23. Margaret J. Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2006), p. ix.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. ix-x.

25. *Ibid.*, p. xi.

26. *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

29. Brian McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000 edition), p. 19.

30. *Ibid.* p. 20.

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

33. “Off the Map” conference; see footnote #21 of this chapter.

34. Lynn D. Leslie, Sarah H. Leslie and Susan J. Conway, *The Pied Pipers of Purpose: Part 1: Human Capital Systems and Church Performance* (Ravenna, OH: Conscience Press, 2004, http://www.discernment-ministries.org/PDF/Purpose_Driven.pdf), pp. 27-29. ; also see chapter 2 of *Faith Undone* by Roger Oakland, op. cit.

35. Bruce H. Lipton, Ph.D., *The Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter & Miracles* (Carlsbad, CA: Hay House Inc., 2008 edition), p. 91; book referred by Pastor Larry DeBruyn.

36. William P. Young, *The Shack*, op. cit., p. 248.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 129, 138.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

39. Ibid., p. 95.
40. Lead Like Jesus Celebration, November 20, 2003, Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama, op. cit.
41. Rick Warren, Saddleback Church e-mail, October 27, 2003, GOD'S DREAM FOR YOU—AND THE WORLD!, op. cit.
42. Brian McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus*, op. cit., p. 142; Shane Claiborne, *Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), p. 358; Erwin Raphael McManus, *An Unstoppable Force: daring to become the church God had in mind* (Group Publishing, 2001), p. 102.
43. Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, op. cit., p. 286.
44. Quote from movie *Field of Dreams*, op. cit.
45. Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York, New York: Lucis Publishing Company), Conclusion, p. 188.
46. Warren Smith, *Reinventing Jesus Christ*, Chapter 4; Smith, *Deceived on Purpose*, Chapters 4, 12, 14. See author's website: <http://www.deceivedonpurpose.com> for online edition of *Reinventing Jesus Christ*.
47. Ray Yungen, *A Time of Departing*, 2nd ed, Fourth Printing, op. cit., p. 145; citing Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, op. cit., p. 126.
48. Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Thomas Merton: Contemplative Critic* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row Publishers, 1991, Triumph Books Edition), p. 46, quoting Thomas Merton. Richard Foster includes Thomas Merton's writings in several of his own books, such as *Devotional Classics*, *Spiritual Classics*, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home* and others.
49. M. Basil Pennington, *Centered Living* (New York, NY: Image Books, 1988), p. 192. Foster quotes or references Basil Pennington in a number of his books, including *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, *Celebration of Discipline*, and *Spiritual Classics*.
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54. Richard and Iona Miller, "As Above; So Below: The Mysteries of Quantum Metaphysics" (The Asklepi Foundation, 2001, <http://www.geocities.com/nwbotanicals/oak/newphysics/asabove.html?200820>).
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63. Neale Donald Walsch, *Friendship with God: an uncommon dialogue* (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1999), p. 23.

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67. Ibid., p. 409.

68. From William Paul Young's blog: <http://www.windrumors.com/30/is-the-story-of-the-shack-trueis-mack-a-real-person/>.

69. Ibid., <http://www.windrumors.com/?s=enamored>.

70. *The Seeker* DVD (20th Century Fox, 2008), transcribed by Larry DeBruyn.