

Two: Humanity Today

The second of Oprah's online lessons probed chapter two of Eckhart Tolle's book, *A New Earth*. Entitled *Ego: The Current State of Humanity*, chapter two begins with a discussion of how to get past thinking (the seat of the ego) to consciousness of the moment. The goal is the peace that passes all understanding (page 56).

The Current State of Humanity

According to Tolle, the ego lives in our thinking. He says, "*The ego is the false sense of self based on mental concepts...identification with form (things).*" In other words, ego is produced by our memories, experiences and training. It is who we think we are.

Tolle calls us to get past our egos, that is, our thinking. Why? In order to live and appreciate the moment, or presence. How? By concentrating on the presence of the thing without labeling it with the name with which our thinking associates it. Think of your hand, he says. Close your eyes and concentrate on knowing your hand is there, not because your brain tells you it is there but by the sensation of it, the subtle tinkle or warmth of it. Be conscious of its presence without thinking of its label – hand. This is, according to Tolle, the beginning of getting in touch with your inner Being, your energy field. It is the means of killing

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your ego. Oprah objected, *"But I need my brain to do that..."* Tolle countered, *"You need your conscious attention to do that..."* That is, as opposed to a thought process.

Oprah began the close of her chapter two interview of Tolle with a question about peace: *"So let's close with the peace that passes all understanding that you talk about on page 56. What is that peace?"*

Tolle: *"That peace comes when you live in internal alignment with the present moment which means what is, whatever is. When you no longer argue with what is, when you don't fight it internally, this present moment already always is as it is."*

Oprah: *"Even if it's a situation that you don't want?"*

Tolle: *"Even if you don't want it, it is."*

I would have to agree that the current state of humanity is ego-centric, and the Bible stands squarely against elevating our prideful selves. The apostle Paul wrote, *"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."* (Philippians 2:3) The Jesus example is one of selflessness. Rather than repay the evil done to Him, He committed Himself to the Father (1 Peter 2:23).

It must be pointed out, however, that the submission we see in the Lord emanates from commitment to the Divine Truth revealed for our instruction. Letting go of ego and submitting wholly to God is, indeed, the basis for finding peace that passes all understanding. That peace (Philippians 4:7) comes from a way of thinking. Philippians 4:6 and following calls us to stop thinking anxiously knowing that the Father will take care of us, to pray and make our desires known to God, and to think positively on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy. All of this comes naturally to those who believe in the God of Creation and have committed themselves to His way of thinking. They trust in Him, not in themselves. They have not emphasized their own consciousness, but rather

have given themselves over to Christ. When, by trusting faith, we can focus upon Christ and His eternal purpose for us, we will find peace. Like Paul, we will be freed from the mistakes of the past, free to press on, making the most of the moment in preparation for the life to come.

If, however, we have sampled Christianity and find that God's way is difficult, the answer is not to abandon ship in favor of some creaky raft riding on one's own think-sos. The proper answer is to confess and repent of past sins, dig in the heels of resolve, set one's sights on the Lord Jesus, and continue the fight of faith according to the guiding Word of God.

Is the Entire Bible True?

The popular New Age teacher, Neale Donald Walsch, operates a blog on BeliefNet.com. Having read in a Walsch book that not everything in the Bible is true, a visitor asked how to separate Bible truth from error. Walsch answered:

"You should know that even top Bible scholars point out that many statements in the Bible are, in fact, not in harmony with facts. There is not enough time or space to run through the Bible chapter by chapter, line by line, and comment upon which words I believe are 'true' or 'accurate' and which are not. Allow me to offer you just a few statements and let you be the judge..."

Then Walsch listed several Old Testament commands of God about sexual relations, dress, women's role, discipline of children, etc., which would be unpopular or unlawful today. For example, stoning an adulterer or a disobedient son. Walsch is either ignorant of or chooses to ignore the fact that those commands were part of an earlier covenant and are no longer in effect. Hebrews 8:7 and 8 explain: *"For if the first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second, Because finding fault with them, He says, Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant*

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with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – ...” Verse 13 adds: *“In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete.”*

Another way to put Walsch's answer is, *“Read the Bible and decide for yourself what is truth and what is not, as it pleases you.”* Why not? For those in the New Age Movement, it is only logical. According to Walsch, God is in me, therefore, I am God.¹ I will decide what is true and what is not. Problem is, man's logic is the broad road to hell.

God of the New Age

Generally, participants in the New Age Movement profess belief in God, whether with a large or small “g”, but they confuse the personal God of Heaven with the creation He spoke into existence. New Age ideology is so firmly rooted in the monism (All is One) of Eastern religions God is reduced to an essence in the universe. All is One. Therefore, they say, the purpose of life is to get in touch with the divine essence, which is in each of us. Writing as if he is God speaking to the reader, Neale Donald Walsch explains: *“The purpose of individual expression is for Me to experience My Self as the whole, through the experiencing of My parts. And while the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, I can only experience this by knowing the sum. And that is who you are. You are the sum of God. I have told you this many times before, and many of you have heard this as the son of God. That, too, is correct. You are the sons, and daughters, of God. Yet it does not matter what labels or names you use, it adds up to the same thing: You are the Sum of God.”*² Different New Age teachers refer to this key concept in various ways: Eckhart Tolle calls it *consciousness* or *Now* (the moment), and Wayne Dyer refers to it as our *life force* or *the Source* or *God*. Other terms used are *I AM*, *Higher Self*, *Universal Love*, and *God-consciousness*.

1 Walsch, Neal Donald, *Complete Conversations with God, Volumes 1-3* (2005),
Penguin Group (USA), New York, NY.

2 Walsch, Neal Donald, *Communion With God* (2000), pp. 11-12, G.P. Putnam's
Sons, New York, NY.