

SCOTT PECK'S THEOLOGY COMPARISON WITH BIBLICAL TEACHINGS

Scott Peck's "Road"

Peck admits to being a Buddhist when he wrote *The Road Less Traveled*, but claims to have converted to Christianity. However, his Buddhist teachings remain a vital part of his writings, along with other aberrations such as process theology, Mormonism, New Age doctrine, and the secular humanist values of psychotherapy.

Truth

Peck has no clear standards concerning the nature of truth. He is committed to mythology and paradox, rather than to the Bible, for determining truth. Although he claims in places not to know anything, his writings reveal that he has developed his own system of truth and values, a system that *rejects Scripture as God's standard of truth*.

"Sanctify them by the truth. Your Word is truth." John 17:17

Scripture

Peck interprets Scripture primarily as *mythology*, and he considers the Bible to be a mixture of truth and error, fact and fiction. He believes that the Fifth Commandment, to honor one's parents, deserves "radical rewriting." He denies the historical accuracy of Adam and Eve, and claims that the Bible supports evolution. Thus Peck sets himself up as the judge of biblically revealed truth.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul...."
Psalm 19:7

God

Peck denies the sovereignty of God. In place of the God of Scripture, Peck worships a finite "god" who is both limited and *in the process of change*. His teachings blur the crucial distinction between God the Creator and man the creature, as Peck is more impressed with the "higher power" terminology of 12-step theology

than the sovereign Lord of Scripture. He uses inclusive language for God, "She" or "He/She."

"But the Lord is the true God. He is the living God, the eternal King." Jeremiah 10:10

Jesus Christ

In places, Peck affirms that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. However, his writings reveal an emphasis on His humanity that effectively denies His unique deity as Son of God. Some of his speculations about what Jesus might have said or thought border on outright blasphemy. Peck does not affirm Christ as the Savior who sacrificed Himself on the cross to make propitiation for the sins of His people.

"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful Word." Hebrews 1:3

Man

Evolution is the foundation for Peck's view of man. He believes that man is evolving *forward*, and thus he anticipates radical changes in the nature of man that Scripture does not support. He stresses man's freedom to the point of denying God's sovereignty altogether. He views the fall into sin as an evolutionary thrusting forth into "consciousness" and therefore a step forward. He claims that man lost his "oneness" with nature at that time. Peck affirms self-love but cautions against self-esteem. In general, he has no absolute standards for how man should live.

Peck proposes "four stages of spirituality" for man. The third stage, characterized by skepticism and atheism, is claimed to be "higher" than the second stage, which would describe the orthodox Christian. The fourth and "highest" state is New Age mysticism.

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...." Romans 5:12

Evil

It is in this area where Peck departs from at least some of the teachings of New Age theology, where the reality of evil is denied.

However, Peck again denies God's sovereignty by viewing evil as essentially beyond God's control. At the same time, he denies the original goodness of creation, taught in Genesis 1, by stating that the world is essentially an evil one that is "contaminated" by good. Another error is Peck's view of evil, in man, as "mental illness" rather than sin against God.

"The Lord works out everything for His own ends--even the wicked for a day of disaster." Proverbs 16:4

The Devil

Peck has come to acknowledge the reality of the devil, but he believes that *at the time of the Fall*, Satan was given a positive role by God, to contribute to the "spiritual growth" of man. Peck's views about the relationship of Christ and the devil border on Mormonism.

A grave error occurs in Peck's view that the devil will ultimately have a chance to accept the "friendship" of mankind and be saved.

"The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."
Revelation 20:10

Resurrection, Heaven and Hell

Peck rejects the bodily resurrection taught in Scripture. He finds it "distasteful." He believes that people of all religions will be found in heaven, and that the "gates of hell" are wide open so that anyone can choose to walk out at any time.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

Eschatology

Instead of the glorious hope of Christ's visible return to consummate history, overthrow evil, and usher in the eternal state, Peck substitutes a global "community" ushered in primarily by the efforts of man.

"For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

Salvation

Peck offers a false salvation message in his teachings about "community building." This "salvation" is claimed to be available to people of all religious faiths. Peck adamantly denies that there is an exclusive way of salvation.

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."
Acts 4:12

New Age

Peck's commitment to New Age theology has undergone some revisions, but he remains entrenched in its pantheism, meditation methods, and hopes of global unity, calling it potentially a "very holy thing" if it is reformational rather than revolutionary.

Community

Peck's vision of "community" is characterized by an inclusivity uniting people of all religious faiths, and a contempt for any claim to exclusive truth. It is a "leaderless" group similar to 12-step meetings. Peck envisions his method of "salvation" occurring in the business community rather than in either the church or the family.

Psychiatry and Religion

There are significant admissions here, as Peck acknowledges his profession's traditional hostility to religion and the

resulting problems. He also recognizes the *religious nature* of counseling, and the fact that psychiatry is not a purely objective science with no system of values. In spite of these admissions, he upholds the values of secular humanism and sees the problems being solved by an integration of psychiatry and spirituality, based on his own "stages of spirituality" and "diagnostic categories" of evil. He affirms a limited value to pastoral counseling, but considers "Christian fundamentalist programs," along with "New Age practitioners," to be *competition from the fringes*.

"For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ***For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. So be on your guard!*** Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears."
Acts 20:27-31 (emphasis added)

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