High Tech Witchcraft

April 26, 2007

Mention witchcraft and most people will think of Harry Potter. And while these books and movies have certainly been incredibly successful in promoting witchcraft, they represent only part of a larger campaign to spread the ideas of Wicca, witchcraft, and Neopaganism throughout our society.

In a recent article in *SCP Newsletter*, Marcia Montenego talked about how witchcraft has gone "high tech." Parents should not only pay attention to books and movies. They should also pay attention to the impact that computers and the Internet are having in the promoting of witchcraft. Here are just a few examples.

1.Dungeons and Dragons – has been a popular fantasy role playing game for many years. Now kids can play it on the Internet or in video or computer games. The player begins by choosing a character to role-play. Each of these characters have different traits and abilities. The game is supervised by an experienced player known as the Dungeon Master. The game uses a number of occult terms. These include: spell casting, invocation, evocation, and summon. And there are spells such as the death spell and the finger of death.

There are several books about Dungeons and Dragons that also give information and suggestions for spell casting. In one book, there is a warning of "The Cost of Magic." It says, "Wizards may have to make terrible pacts with dark powers for the knowledge they seek, priests may have to sacrifice something dear to them to invoke their deity's favor, or the spell-caster may pay an immediate price in terms of fatigue, illness, or even a loss of sanity."

2. Magic: The Gathering – is a fantasy trading card game

created in the early 1990s. The cards are linked to one of five kinds of paranormal magic: red, blue, green, white or black. Players assume the role of wizards or mages (magicians) and use their cards to defeat other players in the game. A key term that shows up in this game as well as in movies like "The Craft" is the term *mana*. It refers to a magical force or power which is essentially a vital life force.

This card game is challenging and requires intricate strategy. It also introduces the players to scary and repulsive images. There is the Bone Shaman or the Necrite (shown licking blood off a dagger) or the Soul Drinker or the Sorceress Queen. Parents should be concerned about the occult and macabre images that players in the game will see as well as the desensitization towards the occult and witchcraft.

3. Yu Gi Oh – was originally a comic created in Japan about a boy playing a card game called "Dueling Monsters." This comic eventually gave rise to a card game, movies, and video games.

The story centers around Yugi who is possessed by a 5000-year-old pharaoh, Yama Yugi, who is trying to solve an ancient puzzle. One Internet site suggests that Yugi is taken over by "dark Yugi" when it needs to work on the puzzle. Others point out that during duels, Yugi seems possessed by the spirit which deepens his voice and shadows him.

4. The Vampire Games – is another role playing game that introduces the players to the world of vampires. This includes the live action role playing games such as *Vampire: The Masquerade* and *Vampire: the Requiem*.

As you might imagine, these games involve dark and macabre situations, including drinking blood and killing innocent people. The vampires are predators on humans and described as killing machines who struggle with their baser instincts. The vampires also have certain powers such as telepathy, psychic projection, and bodily possession.

Players often form clubs in order to play the game. Some players even imitate vampires in real life by wearing razor-sharp artificial fangs. The popularity of these games have spawned others: Werewolf: The Forsaken, Mage: The Awakening, and Sword & Sorcery.

5. World of Warcraft – is an online computer war game. It includes the typical action games strategies but also adds elements of the occult and New Age. There are four main races of beings: humans (one of the youngest races), Orcs (part of a Shamanistic society), Night Elves (who misuse magic), and the Undead Scourge (thousands of walking corpses and extra-dimensional entities).

As with many of the other games already mentioned, strategy and the use of the occult and paranormal magic are key to success in this game. Powers are summoned and spells are cast.

These various forms of "high tech" spell casting are a doorway into the occult and witchcraft. The Bible warns of the dangers of divination, sorcery, and witchcraft (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19-20; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 1 Samuel 15:23; 2 Kings 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13; Isaiah 2:6; 8:19-20; 47:13-14; Ezekiel 13:20-23; Daniel 2:27-28; 5:15-17; Acts 13:7-10; 16:16-18; Galatians 5:19-20; Revelation 22:15). We should not focus our minds and attention on what is dark and dangerous. We are called to let our minds dwell on what is true, honorable, pure, and lovely (Philippians 4:8).

Originally distributed by www.ChristianWorldviewNetwork.com

© 2007 Kerby Anderson

Dungeons and Dragons and FRPGs

Dungeons and Dragons is a fantasy role playing game (or FRPG). Role playing in and of itself can be a useful exercise of the imagination, such as helping kids practice saying no to drugs or alcohol when offered them at a party, or learning to set boundaries by practicing with a part of one's support group. Fantasy can also be a legitimate exercise of the imagination, and learning to distinguish fantasy from reality is an essential part of maturing intellectually. The problem comes when the values and content in the fantasy affect a person adversely.

In this way, D&D or any other FRPG can be compared to rock music: the genre itself is not inherently evil or dangerous, but the content (lyrics, in the case of rock music) is what makes the difference. (For more on that concept, see Jerry Solomon's article "Rock Music" on our website.)

The content of D&D and its effect on players are worth examining.

Worldview

In contrast to a Christian worldview, D&D was created with a magic worldview (and this has not changed over the years). Rather like "the force" of Star Wars, magic is a neutral force, something like gravity, that pervades reality. Characters learn to use magic to manipulate the universe to get what they want. It's a very mechanistic universe, like a vending machine where you insert your coin and out comes a productonly in this universe, people use spells and magical instruments to manipulate the magic toward their desired end. Magic can be used for good or evil.

Two insightful writers, Brian Onken and Elliot Miller, offer a responsible analysis of D&D and FRPGs in general in a paper from Christian Research Institute, "Fantasy Games People Play."{1} They point out that many proponents of D&D try to draw a parallel between their game of choice and the Christian fantasy of J.R.R. Tolkien in *Lord of the Rings*. There are some common elements, but it's the great differences that are a real problem, differences which proponents of FRPGs "either ignore or rationalize away. Christian fantasy works by Tolkien, Lewis, and others are accepted and considered to be a good use of fantasy because they offer a reflection of an essentially Christian world view."{2}

"Though the creators of Dungeons and Dragons may have borrowed many aspects from Tolkien's 'middle earth,' one part they did not consider was the overall setting in which everything took place and from which everything derived its ultimate meaning Tolkien's Christian world view. As a result, the game's world view does not represent the moral universe God created. In place of the creator God, its universe is governed by a multiplicity of gods and demigods. Moreover, its universe is not infused with an absolute, inherent morality. The more thoroughly one investigates the writings of Tolkien, Lewis, and others and compares them to FRP games, the more one will see that there are not only crucial differences in the theological and moral perspectives but also in the context and motives of their respective inventors. Furthermore, there are important differences in the kind and extent of participation required in each (e.g., the cultivation of fantasy in the participatory amoral milieu of Dungeons and Dragons versus the passive moral universe of Tolkien)."{3}

The worldview of D&D is anti-biblical because it presents a universe without a transcendent, good God. The deities of D&D are mythical, like the ancient pantheon of the Roman gods and goddesses.

Morality

Because most FRPGs pit good against evil, some of their proponents point to the games as moral. But their overall morality is pragmatic (what works to get what you want) at best and amoral at worst.{4} "[T]he universes created in fantasy role-playing games generally tend to be confused on the issue of morality. Though they have borrowed many aspects of Tolkien's 'Middle Earth,' the makers of Dungeons and Dragons and other FRP games have not created theistic 'universes.' Rather, their universes are generally governed by a multiplicity of gods and demigods. While in a theistic universe, good is determined by the attributes of God Himself, in FRP worlds good and evil are presented as equal and opposite impersonal poles, and the gods as well as the creatures may align themselves with either. Since there is no supreme God, and since good does not ultimately triumph over evil, many players eventually find themselves preferring to play evil roles; fewer demands are placed on them that way. "Cornerstone [magazine] quotes Rett Kipp, a college student who plays FRP games forty hours a week: "'In D&D it's better to be evil. You get more advantages being evil, and it's easier to go on and not have to think of what to do and what not to do. If for some reason you had the idea in your head that you no longer trust someone, if you chop him down from behind as an evil character there's no penalty for it…'"{5}

Time-eating Monster

You can find any number of family members who have watched FRPGs gobble up their loved ones as they spend hours every day, or each week, engrossed in "their game," either online or in real life. Students have flunked out of school because they didn't go to class or do their homework. People have lost their jobs because they were more committed to playing their game than keeping their commitments at work. And nobody knows how many relationships have collapsed because people were

consumed by their games to the exclusion of all else. The popular online game "EverQuest" has been aptly nicknamed "EverCrack" by many players.{6}

Brian Onken writes, "In a world where more and more demands are made on our time and there seems less and less time available to accomplish the tasks at hand, Dungeons & Dragons (and other fantasy role-playing games) is indeed a creature with a voracious appetite. One of the main requirements of the game is time, and lots of it. Gary Gygax, the originator of Dungeons & Dragons, says: 'the most extensive requirement is time.'{7}

"As advocates of the game get more involved it has a tendency to become a sort of time eating monster in and of itself. After playing the game with her family, a New West magazine researcher noted that, 'Good or evil, it becomes a compulsive force in the lives of those who play.'{8} "What is the problem here? Well, we are exhorted to 'walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil' (Eph. 5:15, 16). In the light of such words, a fantasy game with a ferocious appetite for time is hardly the wise way to walk. To play one will require a tremendous amount of time, and since no one wants to play badly, perhaps such time consumption would best be exchanged for more profitable pursuits."{9}

Bill Schnoebelen, who spent years in the occult before coming to Christ, says, "Remember, as a Christian, we are exhorted to bring 'into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ' (2 Cor. 10:5). How can this be done with so many hours being spent in a game which never mentions Christ and pushes the very sorcery He forbids?"{10}

Blurred Reality

While many people have no trouble distinguishing between reality and fantasy, some FRPG players are sucked into what

could be called “reality distortion.” Players sometimes begin to think of their characters as real people with separate existences. (This is not limited to FRPG, however. I know of one person so caught up in the Left Behind series that she fell asleep thinking about the characters and action in the book she was reading, and upon waking, found herself praying for a character in crisis! And many fans of TV shows don’t really “get it” that the actor who plays a character has a real-life, different existence from the one he or she plays on TV. Not to mention the many letters the author of the Harry Potter books has received from children begging for acceptance into the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry!)

One Dungeon Master (the person with the most control and power in a D&D game) noted that sometimes, when a player’s character gets killed, the game player sometimes suffers psychic shock and may go into depression.{11}

Magic and the Occult

Whether the discussion is Harry Potter or D&D, the objection inevitably arises that this is make believe, it’s fiction, and fairy-tale magic doesn’t exist in the real world, so what’s the big deal?

Elliot Miller of CRI points out, “We must agree that there is a fundamental difference between actually attempting to work magic, and only pretending to do so (this point has not been sufficiently recognized in some of the Christian reviews). However real this distinction may be in the minds of the players, though, I feel no assurance that the spirit world will not respond when it is beckoned.”{12}

Others experienced in spiritual warfare have observed that the very real demonic realm are quite legalistic and literal: when anyone opens a door to them, they will come through it! Most people are completely oblivious to the reality of their choices opening a door to the demonic, but the consequences

catch up with them. This is one reason God has said that all forms of magic are an abomination to Him (Deut. 18)out of His loving desire to protect us.

Miller continues, “Though the possibility of actual contact with the satanic realm through role-playing cannot be denied, my greatest concern is that FRP involvement can create a predisposition toward actual occult activity. There are certain needs and desires which draw people to FRP in the first place. Many sensitive teenagers and adults continually bombarded with evolutionary theories and naturalistic philosophies, seek through FRP an escape from the cold, mechanistic view of the universe which they’ve been led to believe is ‘reality.’ Who wouldn’t prefer an adventurous existence in a magical, purposeful world over the complex, impersonal ‘real world’ being pushed on young people by our educational institutions and the media?”{13}

I would suggest that that “predisposition toward actual occult activity” is indeed, a door propped open for demons to enter in. When players’ views of magic and occultic exercises of power (even pretend) are shaped to see them in a positive, friendly light, they are accepting the very things God condemns. They are buying a lie, and intentionally or not, embracing rebellion against one of God’s absolutes. Internalizing lies and rebellion provides a place for the Enemy to gain first a foothold (Eph. 4:27) and then a stronghold (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

So the occultic magic element of D&D and any other FRPG can be spiritually dangerous.

Bill Schnoebelen says, “Even if you have no intention to ‘do magic’ when you play D&D, you are immersing yourself in an alien, magic worldview which can gradually change the way you think about life and spiritual matters.”{14}

But what about the magic in the works of Tolkien and Lewis?

That kind of fantasy magic is different because the worldview of the literature is biblical, and consistent with the world God made. Behind all the magic is a good, transcendent, holy God. Magic doesn't have a life and power of its own, as a force to be manipulated. Furthermore, the magic in the books of Tolkien and Lewis and other Christian fantasy writers is viewed passively by the reader. In D&D, the player is immersed in the story, and actively uses occult magic as part of the game.

Lust for Power

Elliot Miller writes, "The human craving for power is also given an avenue for expression in FRP games. . . The various magical abilities that players exercise in these imaginary worlds can also whet their appetites for power. The same young man who is unable to prevent his parents from separating, or to make the cute blonde in his history class notice him, can, through FRP, conquer a kingdom or obtain immense treasure simply by casting a spell.

"What happens, then, when the inevitable occurs and this young man is befriended by someone who can introduce him to the occult world? He will discover that practices he has enjoyed in his fantasy world actually go on in the real world. He would like nothing more than to believe that he can divine the future, project his soul outside of his body, perform healings, or cast a spell and get results. The transition from make-believe sorcery to actual sorcery would not be all that difficult. Once he encounters the real power that exists in the occult world, he will happily accept the magical world view of occultism in place of the naturalism he had absorbed."{15}

Bill Schnoebelen makes an excellent point about the lust for power: "Make no mistake about it, magic and sorcery ARE spiritual. It does not matter if they are 'make believe' magic or not. It is the mind that is the battleground. I just

recently had a D&D player who professed Christ tell me that everything he did had Christ in it, because Christ lived in him, even as he was playing D&D. While that may be true of a Christian, the question needs to be asked: is Christ pleased with what His servant is doing? “I used the metaphor of a porn role-playing game, where the participants play acted in various forms of sexual sin such as fornication, adultery or homosexuality. There was no actual sexual touching involved among the players, nor any nudity required. It was all in the mind. Would Jesus be pleased with that? “See, most of us can understand that concept better because most of us are more familiar with the power human sexuality can have over our minds. It is one of the most powerful forces God created within us. Yet, what most Christian gamers do not understand that magic is a kind of spiritual lust. Allowing the concepts of magic and sorcery into our minds awakens within us a kind of sexual itch that has no definable source or cause. It is, however subtle, an itch for power. Magic, at its root, is about power and about rebellion. It is about not liking how God runs the universe and thinking you can do a better job yourself.

“Now of course, we are not saying that everyone who plays D&D is going to end up a sorcerer or a Satanist. But we are saying that being exposed to all these ideas of magic to the degree that the game requires cannot but help have a significant impact on the minds of the players, no matter if they are Christian or unbeliever, and no matter what the ‘template.’

“This is not just chess, football or bridge. This is a game that envelops the player in an entirely different fantasy world in which the power of magic and violence is pervasive. It is a game with a distinct and seductive spiritual worldview that is diametrically opposed to the Bible. Yes, sorcery appears in the Bible. But it is NEVER in the context of a good thing to do. It is always presented as something dangerous and utterly contrary to the will of God.

“The question still stands. Why would a Christian wish to involve themselves in such a game?”{16}

Heart Issue

Onken and Miller offer this insightful analysis of the heart issue:

“[N]either fantasy nor fantasy role playing is wrong in and of itself. When carried out within the context of the Christian world view, it can serve as a useful and creative activity. We are creatures made in the image of an imaginative God, and we should consider it a privilege to possess and exercise this precious gift of imagination. But we must also realize our obligation before God to use this gift in a wholesome way, and to guard against any misuse.

“Discerning the difference between a wholesome use and misuse begins with the question, ‘To what end or for what purpose (is the imagination) being exercised in a particular direction?’ This certainly appears to be the question Jesus had in mind in His Sermon on the Mount when He stated, ‘Every one who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart’ (Matthew 5:28). “If Jesus taught that lust is tantamount to adultery (which God condemns see Deuteronomy 5:18, 22:13-27), would He approve of the deliberate cultivation and enjoyment of fantasy regarding other things that God condemns? Obviously not. To fantasize about those things that God has forbidden in His Word (immorality, the occult, the pursuit of other deities all elements of Dungeons and Dragons) is tantamount to doing them. This cannot be understood in any other way than a misuse of our God-given imagination.

“With the Bible as our guide, this is what we as Christians must guard against ‘so that [we] may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects’ (Colossians 1:10).”{17}

Notes

1. “Fantasy Games People Play,” Christian Resource Institute, http://www.equip.org/free/DD401.pdf
2. Ibid, p. 2.
3. Ibid., p. 2-3.
4. “Should a Christian Play Dungeons and Dragons?”, William Schnoebelen, www.chick.com/articles/frpg.asp.
5. “Fantasy Games People Play,” p. 7.
6. “When Games Stop Being Fun,” April 12, 2002, http://news.com.com/2100-1040_3-881673.html
7. Gary Gygax, Dungeons and Dragons, basic manual. TSR Hobbies, Inc., 1979, 3. Quoted in “Fantasy Games People Play,” p. 4.
8. Moira Johnston, “It’s Only a Game Or Is It?”, New West, (August 25, 1980), 34. Quoted in “Fantasy Games People Play,” p. 4.
9. Fantasy Games People Play, p. 4.
10. Should a Christian Play Dungeons and Dragons?, op.cit.
11. John Eric Holmes, “Confessions of a Dungeon Master,” *Psychology Today* (November 1980), 89. Cited in “Fantasy Games People Play,” p. 4.
12. Fantasy Games People Play, p. 5.
13. Ibid.
14. Should Christians Play Dungeons and Dragons? Op cit.
15. Fantasy Games People Play, p. 5-6.
16. Should Christians Play Dungeons and Dragons? Op cit.
17. Ibid., p. 3.

© 2005 Probe Ministries

Satanism: The World of the Occult – A Christian View of Demonic Worship

Russ Wise provides a good understanding of why people are attracted to a negative sounding practice: the worship of Satan. Looking at this issue from a biblical worldview, he presents information on how God can free people who have bought into this lie. From a Christian perspective, we don't need to fear them but instead stand ready to offer them the deliverance found only in Jesus Christ.

[*Webservant's Note: Since this article was written in 1994, a "new face" of Satanism has emerged, consisting of pagans and atheists who claim to not believe in Satan yet who have appropriated the name "Satanist" for themselves. Many of these young "neo-Satanists" (to coin a phrase) deny the concepts of good and evil, worship themselves, and take great offense at articles like this that describe a Satanic-oriented description of their chosen set of beliefs.*

Nonetheless, we believe Russ Wise's original article is still worth offering because of the high numbers of people drawn into the openly occult practices described herein.]

The Growing Problem

The occult is on the rise; many young people are seeking their spiritual identity through Satanism.

Satanism has become an issue of great concern in our society. It is a phenomena that crosses the city limits into the rural areas of our nation. Satanism is not just a big city problem. The news wires carry story after story about young children being kidnapped, only to be found later as victims of some bizarre ritualistic crime. To help us gain a balanced

perspective of the subject, C. S. Lewis in his book *Screwtape Letters*, says this about Satan:

> There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.

As satanic involvement among our youth increases, we begin to see the primary goal of such activity. It has become clear, according to the data thus far analyzed by those who investigate satanic involvement, that the primary goal is to alter people's values and turn them against themselves, their beliefs, family, God, and society.

When we begin to take a close look at the occult, it becomes necessary to define terms. There is a great difference between cults and the occult. The term *cult* refers to a group of people polarized around one individual who is often a magnetic personality. This individual has his or her own understanding of truth, who God is, man's relationship to God, the existence of heaven and hell, as well as a number of other issues of faith. In most cases such individuals incorporate some degree of biblical truth into their teachings in order to gain a certain amount of credibility and in order to deceive the unwary.

The term *occult* means "hidden" or those things or teachings that are "unknown" or secret. So, the occult is the seeking after knowledge of unknown information, knowledge that is gained beyond the five senses. Therefore, knowledge is received by some supernatural involvement or connection.

Anton LaVey of the First Church of Satan in San Francisco, California, says that

> Satanism is a blatantly selfish, brutal religion. It is

> based on the belief that man is inherently a selfish, violent creature… that the earth will be ruled by those who fight to win.

Satanism challenges the biblical teaching regarding man's relationship to others. We are to esteem others better than ourselves, and we are to be team players. In 1 Corinthians we read about being a part of the body of Christ, whereas, Satanism esteems the "self" over others.

Young satanists believe that the strong will rule with Satan. Once they are sufficiently involved, they often make a pact with Satan. They commit themselves to a future date when they will take their own lives by suicide. They believe that if they submit themselves to Satan in death, they will come back in another life as a stronger being and rule with him forever. According to recent statistics, fourteen young people a day take their own lives. A major concern for those who uphold a Judeo-Christian worldview is that this generation is becoming detached and is losing all sense of morality. Many have lost their mooring. It is imperative for the church, as a corporate body, and we as individuals, to share the message that Jesus Christ is the only possible solution to our emotional and spiritual needs.

The Power that Entices

Power has become an obsession with young satanists. It is sought after on the physical, mental, and spiritual levels. According to one former occultist, the greatest lure into the occult is "power" and "knowledge." Not just corporate power but personal power. Gaining knowledge that others do not possess is another aspect of the occult. When an individuals have more knowledge it affords them a degree of power over those who do not have access to that knowledge.

Likewise, Satanism offers its lure to the youth in our society. Drugs and sex have become the bait that so often

ensnare the unsuspecting.

With the increase of satanic activity, a profile of those involved in Satanism has emerged. They are generally from a white, middle to upper-middle class family. In most cases they are bright and do well in school; however, they are often bored and are not challenged to meet their full potential. They tend to have a low self-worth and are unable to distinguish between right and wrong because of their relative ethical system. They often have problems in the home and in relating to other people around them. They use drugs and are sexually promiscuous. It is a rare occasion when these last two elements are not present in the mix.

Abuse, both physically and emotionally, is another aspect of this mix. Young satanists are often abused children who know no other way to relate to people. Some are a part of a multi-generational family involved in worshiping Satan as savior.

Anton LaVey, Satanist High Priest of the First Church of Satan in San Francisco gives us a glimpse of how Satan is seen in his book *The Satanic Bible*:

> We hold Satan as a symbolic personal savior, who takes care of mundane, fleshly, carnal things.

Satan has attempted to usurp the place of Christ in redeeming mankind. He has endeavored to establish himself as a god who is equal to or greater than Jehovah and in a sense render God ineffective. LaVey goes on to say that “God exists as a universal force, a balancing factor in nature, too impersonal to care one whit whether we live or die.”

Therefore, the Judeo-Christian God is inaccessible and has no compassion. Thus, Satan becomes the solution to man’s deepest needs.

Satanism leads one into bondage through mind control and fear, whereas Christianity allows the individual the freedom of

choice. We have the opportunity to either accept God's free gift of life or reject Him and simply exist separate from God's love.

An Agent of Change

Music has always been at the center of the youth culture. The problem arises when the lyrics promote aberrant behavior. The Night Stalker, Richard Ramirez of Los Angeles, believed that Satan made him invincible. Police say the style of the brutal rapes and 16 murders Ramirez committed resembled the lyrics of the song "Night Prowler" on AC/DC's LP "Highway to Hell."

Along with Ramirez' fascination with AC/DC, he used cocaine and PCP in conjunction with a deep interest in Satan worship. He believed that Satan would protect him and not allow harm to come to him. According to a *People* magazine article as long ago as September 1985,

> Rock 'n roll is turning too often to sex, Satanism, drugs and violence for its major themes and corrupting the values and views of unwary young people.

The lyrics of the last few years of the 1980s have continued on a downward slope. Rachel Matthews, an artist and repertoire representative for Capitol Records, recruits new groups for her company. Her comments regarding a newly signed band reveal what she, as one individual representing the music industry, is looking for in a band:

> I was just going, 'Oh (expletive)! I've never heard anything like this!' I've heard plenty of metal and speed metal, but it was just so intense and out of control, just like this caged psychosis going on. I loved it, because you could actually understand the lyrics. And even if they're morbid and gruesome, it's really cool that you could understand what they're saying. It just makes it twice as evil. I like that." (*Dallas Life Magazine*, 1 July 1988)

The demo that interested Ms. Matthews in the group contained songs like “Die in Pain” and “Foaming at the Mouth.”

The music that causes the greatest concern is the various types of “metal” music. Metal has been classified into three types. First, is party metal, and it represents the most popular style of music. Groups like Bon Jovi, Motley Crue, and Def Leppard are representative of party metal. They tend to glorify sexuality and the party spirit.

The second type is “thrash metal” represented by groups like Metallica, Anthrax, and Megadeth. The primary focus of “thrash metal” is violence and death.

The third type is known as “black metal” and is overtly satanic. The lyrics encourage such activities as incest, necrophilia, rape, torture, and human sacrifice. Black metal is represented by groups like Venom and Slayer.

King Diamond is perhaps the most satanic of all “black metal” groups. He openly professes Satan and incorporates a large amount of satanic activity into his performances.

Music has always been an agent of change in our society. It tends to shape the moral attitudes of each generation. As Christians we should be especially concerned about the lyrics in the music of the youth culture. We cannot afford to allow another generation to become polluted with the immoral themes found in today’s music. As parents it is imperative that we maintain open communication lines with our young people. Without open communication it becomes improbable that we can affect the listening habits of our children. Second, we cannot be hypocritical in our personal listening habits. Third, we need to become familiar with the type of music our children listen to and be willing to acknowledge the good and be prepared to positively criticize that which is not appropriate within our household.

Last, we as parents need to recognize that if our child is

involved in rebellious music, we must attempt to understand what unmet need in his life is being met by his musical diet.

Galatians 5:19-21 says that

> The deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery . . . those who practice such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, it is imperative for us as adults and youth to only listen to and think upon those lyrics that would honor God and His principles.

The Games of Destruction

Satan has used a number of tools over the centuries to ensnare the naive. The Ouija Board has proven to be particularly useful. According to the Dictionary of Mysticism the Ouija Board is "an instrument for communication with the spirits of the dead." The Ouija Board is an open door into the world of the occult and demonic activity. Disembodied spirits speak to the living through the medium of the Ouija Board. This information is believed to be truth from the other side and is not recognized for what it is: Lucifer's delusion to gain our allegiance.

Jane Roberts, the author of *The Seth Material*, relates her story regarding the Ouija Board. She was about to write a book on ESP, and to stimulate her thoughts, she and her husband used a Ouija Board to gain perspective. After a few sessions they were able to receive messages from someone who later identified himself as Seth. The use of the Ouija Board and the gradual, but ever-growing, influence of Seth in Jane's life brought her to the point of possession. Her mind would enter a trance state and a deep male voice would begin to speak, indicating he had a message to get across to our world the wisdom that it was only now ready for. Over a period of ten years Seth produced through Jane over 5000 typewritten records

of alleged higher esoteric truth. Then Seth tried to kill her. Though she had not previously believed in demons, this experience changed her mind.

Internationally-known observer of the occult, Kurt Koch, says that by the use of the Ouija Board revelations from the past and predictions about the future are made.

Edmond Gruss tells us in his book *Cults and the Occult in the Age of Aquarius* that there have been "many cases of 'possession' after a period of Ouija Board use." Supernatural contact is commonly made through use of the board and has become a primary tool of Satan in reaching young people.

The Rev. Donald Page of the Christian Spiritualist Church reports that most possession cases he has dealt with are people who have used the Ouija Board. Francoise Strachan's book, *A Company of Devils*, states that the Ouija Board is "one of the easiest and quickest ways to become possessed."

The greatest danger of the Ouija Board is that an individual begins to place his trust and future hope in the message the board brings. As a Christian our only source of revelation regarding future things is to be God's Word. We are to look to Jesus Christ and His teachings to properly understand our problems and seek a solution. Deuteronomy 18 tells us to beware of mediums and those who practice divination.

1 Chronicles 10 tells the story of Saul who was unfaithful to the Lord and consulted a medium, seeking guidance and did not seek guidance from the Lord. Therefore, the Lord slew him and turned the Kingdom over to David.

Christians can offer several reasons as to why one should not be involved in the use of the Ouija Board. One is simply that the Bible condemns it as being involvement in the occult (Leviticus 19:31, 20:6). Another relates to the tragic experiences of those who have been involved with this medium. And then there's the fact that the messages received are often

false and misleading. They are often obscene and contrary to biblical teaching.

The following passages in Scripture give us, and those who would seek God's perspective, where to go for truth.

"And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits and into wizards . . . should not a people seek unto their God?" (Isaiah 8:19)

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, . . . and it shall be given him." (James 1:5)

The Great Delivery

God is able to deliver those who seek Him. Victory is ours. But first, we must receive God's power.

We have been discussing the problems of satanic involvement. Whether we become deceived by use of the Ouija Board, music, divination or by Dungeons and Dragons, the end result is the same occult bondage.

Mark Bubeck's Moody Press book, *The Adversary*, gives us a sound basis for applying sound biblical doctrine in resisting the devil as he attempts to infiltrate our lives. Basic to all victory of the believer over Satan is the absolute truth of biblical doctrine. There is no substitute. The greatest key in warfare against Satan is when we recognize that God's truth is our only offense.

Bubeck refers to "doctrinal prayer" as an effective tool to use in spiritual warfare. The sixth chapter of Ephesians tells us that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces. We cannot effectively engage Satan in warfare on the natural plane; we must enter the spiritual dimension to adequately challenge Satan and defeat him and his host. According to Bubeck, doctrinal prayer

> …is the practice of praying or applying the objective, absolute truths of the Word of God as the hope and basis of resolving our prayer burden.

Doctrinal prayer presupposes that we have a deep understanding of the Scriptures. Bible memorization is a must for this type of prayer.

Another aspect of our spiritual warfare is that of resistance. We are called to resist the devil. The term “resist” basically means to stand, to stand invincibly or successfully. We can stand firm and remain invincible because of the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross. Jesus was victorious over Satan at the cross. As God’s people, we are victorious over Satan because of Jesus. We can successfully resist Satan as we stand in right relationship with Christ. Since we are in Christ, and He has all authority in heaven and earth, we are in the only place of victory.

Ephesians 6 speaks of our spiritual armor. With the exception of the sword, this armor is defensive in nature. We have the victory; it has been won we simply need to stand our ground. Satan has been defeated at the cross (Colossians 2:8-15) and made powerless (Hebrews 2:14-15). The believer needs to stand in his rightful position in Christ as victor; Jesus has already won the battle.

The Holy Spirit of God shows us the way to righteousness and restoration. Satan attempts to convince us that we are so bad that God wouldn’t want anything to do with us. He seeks to convince us that there is no forgiveness for what we have done or that we have committed the unpardonable sin.

The Holy Spirit uses God’s Word to give us hope and assurance of God’s love and forgiveness, whereas Satan creates despair, doubt, resentment, and anger toward God, His Word, and His people. Satan intends for us to feel as though no one as bad as we are could ever really be saved.

Doctrine and right understanding is important to our spiritual welfare. It is the foundation upon which everything stands. Without it we are subject to every wind that blows, every false teaching that Satan would use to lure us.

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have trusted in His blood atonement, we have a vast number of tools to render the enemy ineffective. Power, position, authority, total victory over Satan's world belong to us. All that remains is for us to appropriate God's promises and recognize our position in Christ, focus our attention against the devil's work, and to rest in what our Lord has done for us.

Satanism is a growing concern in our culture. With this growth comes a great deal of confusion and a lack of understanding. The following information is designed to help you understand the problem by clearly defining the different aspects of the occult and giving you concise information that you can use.

Defining the Occult

Cult

A cult is a group of people polarized around an individual with a magnetic personality, who deviates from orthodox Christianity by distorting the central message of the Bible by additional revelation or by introducing their personal understanding of primary biblical doctrines such as the person of Jesus Christ, heaven, hell, salvation, atonement, the virgin birth, etc.

Occult

Secret or hidden knowledge. This knowledge is not discerned by the five senses and is therefore, supernaturally received through the practice of divination.

Witchcraft

The use of scripturally forbidden supernatural powers to manipulate people and events. Commonly known as the “craft of the wise” or “wicca,” the worship of nature and feminine energies mother nature. Witchcraft is manifested in two opposing views: white magic, and black magic or witchcraft (see Deuteronomy 18:10)

White Magic

The use of supernatural power to manipulate a person or an event to bring about good. The practice of divination is used to bring about “positive” results such as knowledge, healing, etc.

Black Magic

The use of supernatural power to manipulate a person or an event to bring about evil or destruction. Manipulation is achieved by use of rituals and the casting of spells.

Satanism

Unlike Witchcraft, Satanism is the worship of Satan, formerly known as Lucifer, and the practice of Black Magic. Satanism is a reaction against the Christian church and the Word of God in particular. Satanism promotes a do-what-you-want attitude and is ultimately the worship of oneself.

Categories of Involvement

Individuals involved in satanic activity fall into one of four categories:

- Multi-generational international organization
- National organizations
- Independent self-styled groups
- Individual dabblers

The greatest increase in involvement is among the latter group the dabbler. The dabbler is, in most cases, from a middle to

upper- middle class, caucasian home and is a user of drugs and other controlled substances.

The larger concern is not in the number of young people involved in satanic activity but what they are capable of doing when they become absorbed in the worship of Satan.

Satanism centers around involvement in animal sacrifice, blood ritual, sex, the use of drugs and sometimes murder. According to "The Addiction Letter" (1/89),

> Most Satanism revolves around a drug and alcohol dependent lifestyle which glorifies violence, hate, lying, stealing, and vandalism. The involved youngster craves a higher power to validate . . . chemical dependence and Satan fills the spiritual void.

The Mental Profile of the Dabbler

- Rebellion
- Boredom
- Low self-worth

Warning Signs of the Dabbler

The dabbler is likely to have difficulty relating to peers and in most cases, they have withdrawn from their family and religious heritage. They tend to become involved in a variety of the following:

- A drop in grades
- Burglary
- Drug use
- Physical and sexual abuse
- Mind control
- Animal mutilation
- Increased hatred
- Murder
- Suicide

Drug abuse is the common denominator in all levels of Satanism. Drugs have become the primary source of mind-altering experiences for the Satanist, thereby, giving him a false sense of power and spiritual potency.

Characteristics that may indicate satanic involvement

- Avoiding family members
- A change in friends
- Becoming secretive about activities
- Loss of interest in extra-curricular activities
- Personality changes
- An unusual interest in books, movies, videos, etc. with an occult theme
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Lack of attendance of worship with family

Individuals are recruited into satanic groups by any number or combination of the following:

- Free drugs or sex
- Companionship
- Power
- Money
- Pornography
- Personal choice

Satan’s Goal

According to scripture (Matthew 4:9, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Revelation 12:9), Satan’s goal is to deceive man by blinding him to the truth of the gospel and to receive worship for himself (Isaiah 14:12-14). On a more practical level Satan desires to alter an individual’s values and turn them against themselves, their beliefs, family, God and society.

The Church of Satan

Anton Szandor LaVey formed the Church of Satan in 1966. LaVey,

the author of *The Satanic Bible,* is perhaps the most common source of satanic ritual and understanding available to young people today. It can be found in most large secular bookstores. The Satanic Bible has sold more than 600,000 copies since it was first published by Avon Books in 1969.

Secret things

Another common denominator in satanic groups is secrecy. Individuals keep a journal of activity, rituals, charms, or messages in a notebook, blank book and sometimes even a floppy disc. This information is often written in an alphabet that is not widely known. Alphabets commonly used by occultists are: the witches alphabet, the celtic alphabet used by the Druids, the Enochian alphabet, the Egyptian and others.

Personal Initiation

Initiation plays a major role in group activity. Through initiation an individual is given a chance to declare total allegiance to Satan by participation. Often one will sever a portion of a finger or a toe to indicate their commitment to the unholy one.

Other acts include being a participant in a ritual where mutilation of an animal or human is a part of the activity. These acts are usually video-taped to be used at a later time to keep the individual in line if need be. In some cases a criminal act is perpetrated where the initiate is involved in a key role. An unholy communion of sorts is taken during initiatory rituals where a cup or chalice (usually stolen from a church) is used containing a mixture of wine, blood (human or animal) and urine. Satanism is not for the faint-hearted.

Other methods of initiation include body markings. An inverted cross may be burned into one’s forearm or chest, etc.

Body Markings

Commonly used markings include the following (it is important to note that body markings can be used for the preparation of a sacrifice, as well as initiation into a group):

- Goathead
- Inverted cross
- Skull
- Pentagram
- Baphomet
- MENA (amen)
- Black rose
- Swastika

© 1994 Probe Ministries

Recommended Readings

1. Breese, Dave. *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies*. Chicago, IL., Moody Press, 1974.

2. Bubeck, Mark I. *The Adversary*. Chicago, Il., Moody Press, 1975.

3. Bubeck, Mark I. *Overcoming the Adversary*, Chicago, Il., Moody Press, 1984.

4. Dickason, C. Fred. *Demon Possession and the Christian*. Chicago, Il., Moody Press, 1987.

5. Johnston, Jerry. *The Edge of Evil*. Dallas, TX, Word Publishing, 1989.

6. Koch, Kurt. *Between Christ and Satan*. Grand Rapids, Mich., Kregel Publications, 1962.

7. Koch, Kurt. *Occult Bondage and Deliverance*. Grand Rapids, Mich., Kregel Publications, 1970

8. Koch, Kurt. *Satan's Devices*. Grand Rapids, Mich., Kregel Publications, 1978.

9. Korem, Dan. *Powers*. Downers Grove, Il., InterVarsity Press, 1988.

10. Korem, Dan and Meier, Paul. *The Fakers*. Old Tappan, N.J., Fleming H. Revell, 1980.

11. McDowell, Josh and Stewart, Don. *Understanding the Occult*. San Bernadino, CA., Here's Life Publications, 1982.

12. Newport, John P. *Demons, Demons, Demons*. Nashville, TN., Broadman Press, 1972.

13. Taylor, Jack R. *Victory Over the Devil*. Nashville, TN., Broadman Press, 1973.

14. Weldon, John and Levitt, Zola. *Psychic Healing*. Chicago, IL., Moody Press, 1973.

15. Weldon, John and Wilson, Clifford. *Occult Shock and Psychics Forces*. San Diego, CA., Master Books, 1980.