

New Thought—Part 2

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Practice and Teachings

New Thought and its derivatives essentially represent a religion of “the Self”; that is people are inwardly divine and it is thus proper that they should receive divine honor, for they are one essence with all God is. Talk of God reigns supreme in New Thought, since it is always pleasant to talk about oneself.

Relevant premises and characteristics of New Thought include:

1. God is One, the only Reality, and everyone is part of that One Reality.
2. Good is omnipresent and life is perfect, we just do not realize it. If we could open our eyes spiritually we would see the divine perfection of all existence. God is “only Good” and God does not “know” or “recognize” things such as evil, lack, illness and poverty; hence, they are “unreal.”
3. Thought is creative power. People are God’s thought; the creation is the image of God’s thought. Thought controls the image of thought This means that a person’s thoughts control his or her life and environment. Since one’s consciousness is the cause of one’s experience, to alter the consciousness positively or negatively is to alter the experience.
4. Perpetual success is our birthright, such as achieving (recognizing) one’s already existing wealth, health, happiness, love and fulfillment.
5. The Bible is a New Thought manual, properly interpreted.

Among the International New Thought Alliance Declaration of Principles, which lists ten key principles, are the following:

1. We affirm the inseparable oneness of God and humankind, the realization of which comes through spiritual intuition, the implications of which are that we can reproduce the Divine perfection in our bodies, emotions, and all our external affairs....
3. We affirm the Good to be supreme, universal and eternal....
6. We affirm our belief in God as the Universal Wisdom, Love, Life, Truth, Power, Peace, Plenty, Beauty and Joy, “in whom we live, and move and have our being”....
7. We affirm that our mental states are carried forward into manifestation and become our experience through the Creative Law of Cause and Effect.
8. We affirm that the Divine Nature expressing Itself through us manifests itself as health, supply, wisdom, love, life, truth, power, peace, beauty and joy.
9. We affirm that we are invisible spiritual dwellers within human bodies continuing and unfolding as spiritual beings beyond the change called physical death.
10. We affirm that the universe is the body of God, spiritual in essence, governed by God through laws which are spiritual in reality, even when material in appearance.¹

There is, however, no “official” New Thought doctrine, so variations of belief may exist among New Thought practitioners. Nevertheless, a core belief is that people can supply for themselves all that could be required of them for time and eternity; potentially, they have no limits. So if a person is divine, the limitations of time and space, for instance, do not necessarily apply. “Time does not exist in Divine Mind.... Time is man’s creation, not God’s creation.”² Further, people make their own destiny, and their spiritually “enlightened” will is God’s will.

Allegedly, through positive thinking people do not affirm *into* existence the good or change the bad, they merely realize that the ALL-GOOD was there all along, waiting to be discovered, and that the bad was “unreal.” “Negative” things are simply dark and mysterious shadows upon the world waiting to be diffused by the light of knowledge. Once people turn “on” the light the shadows will disappear, for they cannot exist in the light. Thus:

Man, who is a child of God, is God.... so, if man, who is a child of God, is God, then man is Infinite Power. When we awaken to the infinite power which God has given us, all disease will be healed, and poverty will no longer exist.³

Nothing is ours except by right of [proper] consciousness. ... So we work diligently to build our consciousness. All good is ours by right of consciousness.⁴

To *know* we are the Principle of Being, that I AM consciousness, instead of *trying to become* It, clears the consciousness of much doubt and confusion. You can never become what you already are.⁵

We know today that we can change our life by changing our thought.⁶

God’s will is the recognition of that which *is*—not of that which *will be*. Peace is, joy is, love is, harmony is, wholeness is, right action is, wisdom is. God is the Eternal Now. God is timeless and spaceless. So claim your good now!... When your wish or desire for harmony, health, peace, joy or abundance becomes a conviction in your subconscious, then it is God’s will and is no longer man’s wish or choice.... In Biblical language, it is no longer “My will” but, “Thy will be done.”⁷

New Thought uses “spiritual treatments” or “affirmations” by which it attempts to “integrate” one’s fallen consciousness with divine Truth. We have given several examples in our chapters on Religious Science and Unity School of Christianity and do not need to repeat them here. Basically, they affirm the truth of things as seen by New Thought, stressing the mind’s ability to “uncover” the world of Reality, the world where there is no sadness, lack or evil, only joy, abundance and goodness.

Positive thinking and positive affirmation are said to be primarily “reminders,” not causative agents. However, at the individual level this is merely semantics, for lack of positive thinking is, practically speaking, the cause of “evil” and disharmony. If one’s thoughts are not positive, one *will* experience the negative. Thus thought *is* a causative agent, at least from the human perspective.

(to be continued)

Notes:

¹ INTA website

² *New Thought*, Winter 1979, p. 4.

³ *Ibid.*, Summer, 1980, p. 20.

⁴ *Ibid.*, , p. 17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Winter 1979, p. 13.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Summer 1979, p. 12.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 58.