



## **Something Wicca This Way Comes: A New Season Of The Witch In America**

**By Rafael Martinez, Director, TVBSA**

Once thought to have gone the way of the trendy 1960's, the practice of witchcraft, also known as *Wicca* or "*the Craft*" is once again on the rise. Despite the fact that its spirituality defies or denies most accepted Christian truths, Wicca's various traditions attract many people from all walks of life both in and out the church. This is because aside from the lures of its occult roots, Wicca also holds out the draw of personal empowerment, which helps explain why anywhere from 500,000 to 5,000,000 people in the United States now are actively involved with it. For teenagers and young adults seeking purpose, connection and meaning on a very personal level in our morally adrift times, Wicca's flexible philosophy and religious mysticism seem to be a perfect fit that works for them.

Contrary to the many stereotypes circulated about them, most Wiccans simply seek to practice their non-Christian religion as they see fit. Most of them are moral people who pay their taxes, mow their lawns and just happen to have an altar dedicated to a goddess in their homes. Increasingly, many are "coming out of the broom closet", as some of them humorously would say, to assert their right to be counted as a member of society and practicing witch. As Christians, we should respect their right to do so, yet we mustn't remain silent nor uninformed concerning this spirituality of ungodly shadows and wisdom that turns men and women away from the One True God and His Son Jesus Christ.

### **What Is Witchcraft?**

There is great diversity of thought among Wiccans on defining what witchcraft is, yet there are some basic principles that help us see what it

claims to be. One local witch coven leader in spells these out this way:

*Wicca .. is a positive, shamanistic nature religion with two main deities honored and worshipped in Wiccan rites: the Goddess (the female aspect and a deity related to the ancient mother Goddess in Her triple aspects of Maiden, Mother and Crone) and Her consort, the Horned God (the male aspect). Their names vary from one Wiccan tradition to the next ..*

As can be seen, Wicca is centrally concerned with worshipping and interacting with various gods and goddesses generally understood to exist in two major forms, the *Horned God* and the *Goddess*, although identified with often very different names and symbols. He goes on:

*Wicca often includes the practice of various forms of white magick (usually for healing purposes or as a counter to negativity) as well as rites to attune oneself with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the moon and the four seasons.*

Divine intervention of these deities can be sought after by the use of "*magick*", the practice of seeking supernaturally-endowed blessings by the use of rituals, sacred objects and other means to invoke their power. Wiccans believe they follow in the footsteps of the shamans, or "medicine men" of ancient pagans, those who first created these ceremonial acts of magick in ages past. This practice is Wicca's most well-known trademark, from foretelling the future, healing the sick, soothing one's personal fears, and seeking protection, prosperity and contact with spirit guides for personal growth and empowerment.

The created order of nature as seen in the changing of moons and the seasons is seen as a manifestation of these deities. This belief is based upon **pantheism**, the view that God exists as nature itself, as creation one can experience. Pantheism is a firm foundation of many pagan religious systems as the leader further explains:

*This God or Goddess – bearing different names at different times and in different places – can be found in nearly all the world's historic religious systems. Paganism does not oppose nor deny other religions. It is simply a pre-Christian faith.*

Some of the teachings Wiccans freely have accepted from other pagan belief systems is the belief in *reincarnation* (the belief of continual birth, death and rebirth by individuals), the Eastern "*law of karma*" (in which one's actions in this life directly affect one's standing in their next life) and many elements of pagan worship such as *candleburning rituals*, the identification of the

sun, moon and stars with various deities, offerings to the god/goddess and observation of holy days often called “sabbats” held throughout the year.

Wicca is a religion to be primarily experienced. Personal encounter with the perceived “divine.” by touching, tasting, hearing, seeing and smelling the various elements of Wiccan spirituality lead witches into communion with the God/Goddess. It often leads to their “drawing down the moon,” in which the actual bodily possession of a witch by his or her god or goddess occurs.

### What Witchcraft Is Not

**Wicca is not Satanism!** Satanism is more rightly a philosophy of rebellion against Christian morals; much of Satanism is actually quite atheistic. The figure of Satan as the opposer of God is heralded by Satanists as an example to follow largely for shock value, but to Wiccans, Satan is a Christian concept that their pantheistic religion does not recognize. *Satanism is actually secular humanism* wearing a devil’s mask that turns Satanists inward to self-gratification. *Wicca is a religious pantheism* wearing many hats from many pagan traditions seeking to connect Wiccans to the “divine” in all creation.

**Wicca is not a cult!** Cultic movements typically demand total submission from members to their leadership that is achieved by the free usage of deceptive indoctrination and social pressures by the group to comply. However, Wicca, by this definition cannot be considered cultic. This is because witches are by nature non-conformists who’d be in the sharpest disagreement with the demands of cult authority figures. This is not to say that isolated cults within Wicca don’t exist (they do), but the very nature of Wiccan individualism would undercut attempts by authoritarian Wiccans to create one.

### Christian Light On Wiccan Shadows

While Wicca should not be misunderstood and demonized as things it is not, as we’ve just briefly discussed, let it not be viewed as just a harmless menu item of the spiritual marketplaces found throughout our lives:

- The Wiccan call to worship other gods or nature itself as God is not only blasphemous but an insult to the One True God who is the Creator and not the creation (Romans 1:18-25, Isaiah 45:18, Psalms 19:1, 97:9).
- Wicca boldly identifies natural creation as a manifestation of divinity, when it is God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ alone who has done so as God’s final self-revelation to us. (Hebrews. 1:1-2, Phil. 2:5-11, John 14:9).

- The Bible expressly forbids involvement with the occultic practices of Wicca such as any kind of *divination* (foretelling the future), *necromancy* (communicating with the dead), or *magickal* rites invoking gods or goddesses. It shows that such practices compel those involved, for all of their sincerity and earnestness, towards the worship of these “deities”, which are actually demonic in nature and deception (Deuteronomy 11:16, 32:17 1 Timothy 4:1).
- Ultimately, to put trust into one’s personal efforts to change their lives through magick, or contact with the spirit world is an act of spiritual rebellion against Him and a rejection of His care (Isaiah 8:19-20).
- Wiccan teaching of constantly changing and contradictory views on the God/Goddess is in the sharpest contradiction to the Biblical unveiling of an unchanging and almighty God (Psalms 119:89-91, Malachi 3:6).

Additionally, Wicca’s ethical and moral relativity and its’ unrealistic view of life when confronted by pain, suffering and evil simply does not hold up to serious consideration. For example, Wiccans follow a credo called the “Wiccan Rede” (“Do what you will, but harm none”) claiming it to be the only standard for Wiccan living, yet simultaneously claiming that there are really no truly binding moral absolutes they should be held to! So what good is the Rede and why should it be followed? Questions like these of Wicca’s philosophically rough edges are overlooked by many of them to avoid their troubling implications.

The lure of Wicca uses the bright promises of experiencing the divine, the building of spiritual community with like-minded people, and an intimate spirituality that bestows health, wealth and personal growth. Yet Wicca ultimately is a spiritual dead end and one that simply cannot truly fill the needs of humanity. Though **not** Satanism, it can be *considered* satanic since it is a deliberate tangent leading thousands away from the One True God who created them to exalt false deities that seek their worship. True communion with Him involving all the spiritual passion one can muster to do so does indeed exist by following Jesus Christ alone and not the fascinations of Wicca’s new days in the sun.

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***The Goddess Revival* (Baker 1995); *Witchcraft* (Baker 1996); and the *Zondervan Guide To Cults & Religious Movements* book *Goddess Worship* (Zondervan 1996)**

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