



Many years ago, a musical group called **Snap!** recorded a catchy piece called "The Power Song," which contains the hook, "I've Got the Power!" The song has been used since then in various commercials, movies, and elsewhere.

Rhonda Byrne is back after a four-year absence to tell us what she has learned since releasing her bestselling book *The Secret*¹ in 2006.² At the beginning of her 2010 follow-up book, entitled *The Power*,³ she explains:

"*The Secret* reveals the law of attraction — the most powerful law that governs our lives. *The Power* contains the essence of everything I have learned since *The Secret* was released in 2006. In *The Power* you will come to understand that all it takes is just one thing to change your relationships, money, health, happiness, career, and your entire life. You don't need to have read *The Secret* for *The Power* to change your life, because everything you need to know is contained in *The Power*. If you have read *The Secret*, then this book will add immeasurably to what you already know."⁴

THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

In the quotation above, Byrne mentions "the law of attraction — the

most powerful law that governs our lives." What is the law of attraction? Christian apologist Ron Rhodes explains that this "law" is associated with a 19th-century philosophical/religious movement called New Thought:

"This law [of attraction] says that just as like attracts like, so our thoughts can attract the things they want or expect. Negative thoughts attract dismal circumstances; positive thoughts attract more desirable circumstances. Our thoughts can be either creative or destructive. New Thought sets out to teach people how to use their thoughts creatively."⁵

Rhonda Byrne gives this explanation:

"In universal terms, the law of attraction says: like attracts like. What that means in simple terms for your life is: what you *give* out, you *receive* back. Whatever you give out in life is what you receive back in life. Whatever you give, by the law of attraction, is exactly what you attract back to yourself."⁶

Byrne speaks of people being magnets that bring things to themselves by thinking about those things and by the feelings they feel inside, whether

good or bad. So, thinking about what you *do* want (and *not* thinking about what you *don't* want); and especially by feeling good inside, you attract the things you desire.

Conversely, by thinking about things you *don't* want; and/or feeling bad inside, you attract things that you don't want. Byrne views your thoughts and feelings as transmissions to the universe, causing things (good or bad) to come back to you from the universe.

The following quotations from *The Secret* will substantiate the assertions stated above:

"Remember that you are a magnet, attracting everything to you ... The more you practice and begin to see the law of attraction bringing things to you, the greater the magnet you will become, because you will add the power of faith, belief, and knowing."⁷

"I want to let you in on a secret to *The Secret*. The shortcut to anything you want in your life is to BE and FEEL happy now! It is the fastest way to bring money and anything else you want into your life. Focus on radiating out into the Universe those feelings of joy and happiness. When you do that, you will attract back to

you all things that bring you joy and happiness, which will not only include an abundance of money, but everything else you are wanting. You must radiate out the signal to bring back what you want."⁸

"As you deliberately focus on what you want, as you begin to radiate good feelings, the law of attraction will respond. All you have to do is make a start, and as you do, you will unleash the magic."⁹

"Nothing can come into your experience unless you summon it through persistent thoughts."¹⁰

Regarding feeling bad, Byrne declares:

"When you are feeling bad, you are on the frequency of drawing more bad things. The law of attraction *must* respond by broadcasting back to you more pictures of bad things and things that will make you feel bad. As you feel bad, and don't make any effort to change your thoughts and feel better, you are in effect saying, 'Bring me more circumstances that will make me feel bad. Bring it on!'"¹¹

As stated above, Byrne regards people as transmitting signals to the universe via their thoughts and feelings:

"...you are the most powerful transmission tower in the Universe."¹²

"When you think about what you want, and you emit that frequency, you cause the energy of what you want to vibrate at that frequency and you bring it to You! As you focus on what you want, you are changing the vibration of the atoms of that thing, and you are causing it to vibrate *to* You. The reason you are the most powerful transmission tower in the Universe is because you have been given the power to focus your energy through your thoughts and alter the vibrations of what you are

focused on, which then magnetically draws it to you."¹³

REWIND ... WHO IS RHONDA BYRNE?

In 2006, Rhonda Byrne made a big splash when she first produced a DVD called *The Secret*, followed later that year by a book with the same name. The book amounted to an edited transcript of the DVD, with additional text by Byrne and a number of quotations from various sources. Both the DVD and the book claimed that there was a secret which a few people had known throughout time, and which had been kept from the masses. This secret was a powerful key of knowledge, which, possessed and used, could bring a person anything his or her heart desired. In her book, Byrne stated:

"There isn't a single thing that you cannot do with this knowledge. It doesn't matter who you are or where you are, The Secret can give you whatever you want."¹⁴

Only a page later, Byrne reinforces what she stated above:

"As you travel through [this book's] pages and you learn The Secret, you will come to know how you can have, be, or do anything you want."¹⁵

Byrne herself is around 60 years old, a divorcee¹⁶ with two daughters, Hayley and Skye. According to the scant biographical information gleaned from her "Creative Biography" on her Website:

"Rhonda was born in Australia and began her career as a radio producer before moving into television production. Many of her shows won industry awards and were screened in major countries outside Australia. Rhonda's experience, background, and skill in film and television production were instrumental in the creation of *The Secret* film. In May of 2007, Rhonda Byrne was recognized as one of the world's most influential people in TIME magazine's

'The TIME 100: The People Who Shape Our World', and shortly afterwards appeared in Forbes' 'The Celebrity 100' list. Rhonda currently lives outside of Los Angeles."¹⁷

As to how Byrne came to produce the popular DVD and book, both entitled *The Secret*, she informs us in the book's Foreword, in dramatic fashion:

"A year ago,¹⁸ my life had collapsed around me. I'd worked myself into exhaustion, my father died suddenly, and my relationships with my work colleagues and loved ones were in turmoil. Little did I know at the time, out of my greatest despair was to come the greatest gift. I'd been given a glimpse of a Great Secret — The Secret to life. The glimpse came in a hundred-year-old book, given to me by my daughter Hayley.¹⁹ I began tracing The Secret back through history. I couldn't believe all the people who knew this. They were the greatest people in history: Plato, Shakespeare, Newton, Hugo, Beethoven, Lincoln, Emerson, Edison, Einstein. Incredulous, I asked, 'Why doesn't *everyone* know this?' A burning desire to share The Secret with the world consumed me, and I began searching for people alive today who knew The Secret. One by one they began to emerge. I became a magnet: as I began to search, one great living master after another was drawn to me. When I discovered one teacher, that one would link to the next, in a perfect chain. ... In a few short weeks I had traced The Secret back through the centuries, and I had discovered the modern-day practitioners of the Secret. ... We [i.e., herself and her production team] did not have a single teacher secured to film, but we knew The Secret, and so with utter faith I flew from Australia to the United States where the majority of the teachers were based. ... We literally magnetized everything and

everyone to us. Eight months later *The Secret* was released."²⁰

While this sounds dramatic and miraculous, things are not always as they appear. One Australian magazine article about Byrne notes:

"Even alternative spiritual teachers such as Paul Wilson have criticised the book's message as simplistic and contradictory. If the law of attraction was a centuries-old secret, how could Byrne find two dozen hugely popular 'teachers' to talk about it?"²¹

And in her book examining *The Secret*, wide-ranging researcher and author Alexandra Bruce observed:

"Whether by dint of the Law of Attraction or a brilliant, calculated move on Rhonda's part, most of the interviews that appear in [the DVD] *The Secret* were filmed at a biannual meeting of the Transformational Leadership Council (TLC). This proved to be fateful, indeed. The TLC is a members-only group of self-help luminaries founded by *Chicken Soup for the Soul* author Jack Canfield, who has become something of a Godfather in the self-help industry. Like Canfield, many of the TLC's members are marketing geniuses who have successful careers as consultants to Fortune 500 companies. The aggregate sales power of all the people interviewed in *The Secret* is mammoth and each was able to mobilize his or her own network in support of the film, catapulting Rhonda into the stratosphere of super-success."²²

The fact that Oprah Winfrey threw her considerable celebrity in support of *The Secret* didn't hurt, either.

Bruce also notes:

"Besides high membership in the TLC, most of the speakers who appear in *The Secret* have been regulars on the New Thought/Unity Church circuit for years and they continue to speak regularly at Unity Churches all over America. The principles es-

poused in *The Secret* are largely those of the Unity Church, the main New Thought denomination, much admired by Oprah Winfrey. Founded in 1889 by American husband and wife team Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, it has a present-day following of some 2,000,000 adherents around the world."²³

In light of the above, "The Secret" doesn't seem to be much of a "secret" at all, nor does there seem to have been much "magnetism" involved in Byrne's securing of the 24 teachers who appear in the DVD and in the pages of her book *The Secret*.

However, in the words of one observer:

"It was an incredibly savvy move to call it "The Secret,"" says Donavin Bennes, a buyer who specializes in metaphysics for Borders Books. "We all want to be in on a secret. But to present it as *the* secret, that was brilliant."²⁴

NEW THOUGHT: THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE SECRET and THE POWER

At this point, it is helpful to discuss the 19th-century philosophical/religious movement known as New Thought. That New Thought is the foundation of Byrne's teachings is evidenced by her many citations of a number of New Thought authors in both of her books, as well as the fact that two important sources she credits with her own introduction into The Secret were both books by New Thought authors: *The Science of Getting Rich*²⁵ by Wallace D. Wattles and *The Master Key System*²⁶ by Charles F. Haanel.²⁷ (She offers both of these books as free downloads from her Website.) Additionally, in the "Recommended Reading" section of her Website, many, if not most, of the sources she recommends are written by New Thought authors.²⁸

An English dictionary defines New Thought:

"A modern religious movement that emphasizes spiritual healing

and the creative power of positive thought."²⁹

One Christian researcher describes New Thought in this way:

"In summary, New Thought was a system of cultic belief that taught that true reality is spiritual, that the spiritual is the cause of all physical effects, and that the human mind through positive mental attitude and positive confession has the power to create its own reality: either health and wealth, or sickness and poverty."³⁰

According to *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*:

"Though it is difficult to summarize New Thought beliefs, since they are so varied and to so large a degree individualistic, it is possible to summarize some of the more prevalent views."³¹

The *Encyclopædia* further informs:

"In 1916 the International New Thought Alliance (formed 1914) agreed upon a purpose that embraces some central ideas of most groups: To teach the Infinitude of the Supreme One; the Divinity of Man and his Infinite Possibilities through the creative power of constructive thinking and obedience to the voice of the indwelling Presence which is our source of Inspiration, Power, Health and Prosperity."³²

Concerning the New Thought view of God, Christian researcher D.R. McConnell states:

"The god in which the metaphysical cults believe is not a *personal* god who *sovereignly* governs the universe. Their god is an *impersonal* force: 'the Infinite Power,' 'the Spirit of Infinite Life,' and 'the Infinite Intelligence.' This infinite, but impersonal, force rules the universe indirectly through 'immutable laws' rather than directly through his presence and wisdom. Historically, this concept of God could be categorized as a spiritualized form of 'deism' so

prevalent in the late nineteenth century."³³

Christian apologist and researcher Robert M. Bowman cites the quotation from McConnell above and then comments:

"The only thing I would add to McConnell's description is that the metaphysical concept of God, while it did develop historically from deism, ended up more akin to pantheism than to deism. *Deism* regards God as a personal being who is distinct from the world he created and who governs the world by unchanging natural laws that even he never violates (so that miracles do not occur). *Pantheism* regards God as an impersonal or semipersonal being immanent in the world and more or less identical to the unchanging laws governing reality."³⁴

MADE IN AMERICA: A BRIEF HISTORY OF NEW THOUGHT³⁵

New Thought arose in America in the latter half of the 19th-century. *The New Encyclopædia Britannica* states:

"The origins of New Thought may be traced to a dissatisfaction on the part of many persons with scientific empiricism and their reaction to the religious skepticism of the 17th and 18th centuries. The romanticism and idealism of the 19th century also influenced the New Thought movement, of which Phineas P. Quimby (1802-66) is usually cited as the earliest proponent."³⁶

Christian religious researcher James Beverley states:

"The term *New Thought* refers to the metaphysical tradition associated with Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-66) and his ideological heirs. Quimby, one of the original figures in the theory of mind over matter, was influenced by Mesmerism and hypnosis. He opened an office in Portland, Maine, in 1859. Though he started no church, he had an impact, either directly or indirectly, on numerous religious

leaders, including the following: Warren Felt Evans (1817-89); Julius Dresser (1838-93); Horatio Dresser (1866-1954); Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), the founder of Christian Science; Emma Curtis Hopkins (1853-1925); Charles and Myrtle Fillmore;³⁷ and Ernest Holmes (1877-1960), the founder of Religious Science."³⁸

Mary Baker Eddy, who later founded Christian Science, had at one time been a patient of Quimby's and was influenced by his views.

New Thought author Glenn R. Mosley notes that forerunners of the New Thought movement included "Franz Anton Mesmer, Emanuel Swedenborg, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Phineas Parkhurst Quimby."³⁹

Mosley says that Emerson "was influenced by such schools of thought as English Romanticism, Neoplatonism, and Hindu philosophy."⁴⁰ Another influence on New Thought was that of philosopher G.W.F. Hegel.⁴¹

Mosley also observes:

"New Thought has evolved as a movement that has no specific dogma to which the member religious movements must adhere. ... Although opinions regarding who actually founded New Thought vary, since the essence of the movement is rooted in the interpretation of the teachings of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (known as 'Park'), he is credited as the overall intellectual father of New Thought."⁴²

As Mosley indicates, there is debate as to who actually founded the New Thought movement. Some believe it was Quimby while others believe it was Emma Curtis Hopkins, who was at one time a student of Mary Baker Eddy. Hopkins also worked with Eddy until there was a falling out between them. Hopkins later taught some of the leading founders of the mind science religions. (The mind science religions include Christian Science, Unity, and Religious Science.) Others say it was founded by New Thought author Warren Felt Evans (1817-1889). Regarding Evans, one

contemporary book on the New Thought movement states:

"He was among the first to write of healing as taught and practiced by Phineas Parkhurst Quimby. Evans was a Swedenborgian and he integrated the philosophies of Emanuel Swedenborg and Quimby and, to some degree, Franz Anton Mesmer. Several New Thought historians believe that the literary efforts of Evans in synthesizing the work of Swedenborg and Quimby is more important to the New Thought movement than the work of Quimby himself."⁴³

Two additional important figures in the early New Thought movement were Ralph Waldo Trine (1866-1958), author of the book *In Tune With the Infinite*, among others; and Thomas Troward (1847-1918), who was also a judge.

One reason that providing a precise definition of New Thought is not easy is explained by Christian researchers and authors John Ankerberg and John Weldon:

"New Thought is an umbrella designation covering hundreds, possibly thousands, of independent churches around the world. Broadly speaking, Religious Science (Science of Mind), Divine Science, Unity School of Christianity and scores of smaller independent organizations constitute New Thought."⁴⁴

One source notes that, "After 1890 the term *New Thought* came into vogue when a periodical by the same name began."⁴⁵

Christian Science and New Thought share a common spiritual lineage through the teachings of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby. Although they have some significant theological differences, they also hold some important tenets in common, and are both mind science religions. However, Christian Science is not part of the New Thought movement by design.⁴⁶ Regarding the founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, one source notes that she:

“Founded Church of Christ, Scientist, 1881. She was initially a student in the growing New Thought movement, but she became insular and separated herself and her organization from the movement and its outgrowths, such as Religious Science, Divine Science, and Unity.”⁴⁷

McConnell notes that, “New Thought ideas form the foundation of a variety of widely read self-help and success-motivation books.”⁴⁸ Just two examples of this that he gives are Norman Vincent Peale’s bestseller, *The Power of Positive Thinking* and Napoleon Hill’s *Think and Grow Rich*.⁴⁹ There are certainly many other, both old and new, self-help books by authors who also espouse New Thought concepts including, of course, Rhonda Byrne’s *The Secret* and *The Power*.

Two prominent 20th-century New Thought promulgators were author and New Thought minister Emmet Fox and author and pastor Norman Vincent Peale⁵⁰ (although Peale was, inconsistently enough, pastor of a Christian church).⁵¹ Della Reese, of the former television series *Touched By An Angel*, is a contemporary New Thought minister.⁵² Additionally, Dr. Michael Beckwith, prominently featured in both *The Secret* book and DVD, is a contemporary New Thought leader.⁵³

Ankerberg and Weldon note:

“Almost every leader in the New Thought and Mind Science movement is either a ‘doctor,’ reverend or both, but it appears that only a relatively few have legitimate Ph.D.s or the equivalent from accredited institutions.”⁵⁴

THE POWER

If we take Byrne at her word that her book *The Power* contains “the essence of everything I have learned since *The Secret* was released in 2006,” the question becomes “What has she learned in four years?”

Apparently not much, because *The Power* seems to be a somewhat less

flamboyant exposition of the law of attraction that she introduced in her original bestseller *The Secret*. Although *The Power* is slightly longer than *The Secret* (by about 50 pages), she seems to cover much the same ground that she had in her earlier book. However, in the latter book she has toned down her language somewhat.

The Power also features a dizzying array of supporting quotations and sources, set off from the text of the book in various places on its pages. Within the text are at least 122 quotations from some 78 sources. (This doesn’t include her quotation at the very beginning of the book from “The Emerald Tablet,” an esoteric source that she dates at “around 3000 BC.” A different quotation from The Emerald Tablet also introduced *The Secret*.) Somehow, however, one suspects that at least some of the quotations she cites might have had a very different meaning in context — and she doesn’t give the context for her quotations.

In *The Power*, Byrne states that the most powerful force in the universe is love⁵⁵ which sounds almost biblical. However, in saying this, what Byrne is referring to by the word “love” is what she referred to in *The Secret* as the law of attraction. The following passage near the beginning of *The Power* shows this:

“To harness the positive force of love and change your life, you must understand its law, the most powerful law in the universe — the law of attraction. From the greatest to the smallest — the law of attraction is what holds every star in the universe and forms every atom and molecule.”⁵⁶

Again, on the very next page, she states, “The force of attraction is the force of love! Attraction is love.”⁵⁷ On the same page, she gives a supporting quotation from New Thought author Charles Haanel:

“The law of attraction or the law of love ... they are one and the same.”⁵⁸

She follows Haanel’s quote by stating:

“The law of attraction is the law of love, and it is the all-powerful law that keeps everything in harmony, from countless galaxies to atoms. It is operating in everything and through everything in the universe. And it is the law that is operating in your life.”⁵⁹

So, as demonstrated above, in revealing this great power of love, she has simply redefined the word “love” as a synonym for the law of attraction. Thus, both *The Secret* and its successor *The Power* are both expositions of Byrne’s understanding of the New Thought concept of the law of attraction. In fact, in *The Secret*, Byrne had already spoken about her belief in the importance of “love” and had also used the word “love” as a synonym for the law of attraction. For instance, in that book, she had written:

“In fact, some of the great thinkers of the past referred to the law of attraction as the law of love.”⁶⁰

However, in *The Power*, Byrne is inconsistent in her use of the word “love,” because elsewhere in the volume she seems to use this same “law of attraction type of love” to mean other things, such as loving actions;⁶¹ or positive feelings about something;⁶² or even “making love.”⁶³ Likewise, in *The Secret* Byrne had used the word “love” to refer to loving feelings.⁶⁴

Manifesting complete confusion and disregard for the meaning of the word, she tries to make her case for love (seemingly, the “law of attraction” that she has redefined as love) by stating:

“What would the world be without love? First of all, you wouldn’t even exist; without love you couldn’t have been born. None of your family and friends would have been born either. In fact, there wouldn’t be a single human being on the planet. If the force of love ceased today, the entire human race would decrease and eventually die out.

Every single invention, discovery, and human creation came from the love in a human heart. If it were not for the love of the Wright Brothers, we could not fly in an airplane. ... Without the love of architects and builders, there would be no homes, buildings, or cities. ... There would be no books, no paintings, and no music, because all of these things are created from the positive force of love. Take a look around you right now. Whatever you see that is a human creation would not be there without love."⁶⁵

She further declares:

"Without love, you wouldn't move. There would be no positive force to propel you to get up in the morning, to work, play, dance, talk, learn, listen to music, or do anything at all. You'd be like a stone statue."⁶⁶

And she also states, "The force of love is *the* intelligence of life and the universe."⁶⁷ Here she seems to almost equate love with God; however, it is clear from both *The Secret* and *The Power* that Byrne's "God" (if she even believes in God) is not the personal God of the Bible, but rather an impersonal force that people are able to manipulate to gain their personal desires and to achieve their ambitions. In her way of thinking, man is not the servant of a personal, loving God, but the potential master of an impersonal, intelligent force. In *The Power*, Byrne called love a "force" about 80 times.

What does appear to be a difference between her two books is the heightened emphasis that she puts on "love" (although as a "force") in the second book. However, because she uses "love" as a synonym for the law of attraction, both books are still about the law of attraction, whichever name she chooses to use for it; the difference being largely semantic.

CONTRASTING THE POWER and THE SECRET

One contrast between Byrne's two books is that in *The Secret*, Byrne made a point of capitalizing two

words throughout the book: The word "You" and the word "Universe," when referring to "the Universe."

Concerning the reason she capitalized the word "You," Byrne explained in the book's Foreword that she did this so the reader would understand that she created *The Secret* for them personally.⁶⁸

As to the reason she capitalized "Universe," it seems to be because she is using the term as a vague reference to an impersonal pantheistic deity that she believes must inexorably and mechanically respond to the law of attraction, for good or for ill.

For unstated reasons, she has dispensed with this capitalization of "You" and "Universe" in *The Power*.

Another difference between the two books is that *The Secret* consisted of an edited transcript of 24 teachers interviewed for the DVD of the same name interlaced with additional text added by Byrne (and a number of quotations by others). By contrast, *The Power* is a solo effort on Byrne's part (bolstered by multitudes of quotations from others).

A third difference between the books is that *The Secret* appeared to feature a combination of New Thought and New Age teachers, although this seeming combination may have been more apparent than real; regardless, *The Power* seems to align strictly with New Thought exponents.

A fourth difference between the two books is that, while one will find Jesus only mentioned once in the text of Byrne's first book,⁶⁹ He is quoted three times in her latest book⁷⁰ and also referred to twice in the book's text.⁷¹ However, in each of the three instances in *The Power* where she directly quotes Him, she refers to Him merely as the "Founder of Christianity."

A fifth difference between the books is the "formula" she gives for attaining desires. In *The Secret*, the formula, which she attributes to the New Testament, is "ask, believe, receive;"⁷²

however, in *The Power*, it is "imagine," "feel," and "receive."⁷³ Interestingly, the words she uses in each formula do not seem to mean the same thing; that is, by "ask," she doesn't mean the same thing as she does by "imagine;" by "believe," she doesn't mean the same thing as she means by "feel." She doesn't even seem to mean the same thing by the word "receive" in each of the formulas.

A sixth difference between the books is that, in *The Power*, she seems to have toned down *some* of her more extreme statements that she had made in *The Secret*. Here are two examples:

1. In her first book, Byrne couldn't say enough about who each person actually is. For instance, according to her, "You are eternal energy."⁷⁴ And most amazingly of all, she asserted:

"You are God in a physical body. You are Spirit in the flesh. You are Eternal Life expressing itself as You. You are a cosmic being. You are all power. You are all wisdom. You are all intelligence. You are perfection. You are magnificence. You are the creator, and you are creating the creation of You on this planet."⁷⁵

It would seem that Byrne still believes this, although her language is a little less extravagant in *The Power*, in that she doesn't directly say that "you are God." However, in this latter book, she still wrote:

"You are an eternal being living temporarily in a human body. If you stopped existing, there would be an empty space in the universe, and the whole universe would collapse into that empty space."⁷⁶

And adds:

"And so do you think with all this that perhaps you are a wee bit more special than you ever considered yourself to be? Do you think perhaps you might be a little more valuable than you thought? You, every person you know, and every person who has ever lived have no end!"⁷⁷

2. In her first book, Byrne (and Joe Vitale, one of the teachers featured in both the book and DVD versions of *The Secret*) made some statements about people attracting bad things to themselves. They stated that people who suffered bad things brought those bad things upon themselves through the law of attraction.⁷⁸ In openly stating this, they were actually just being logically consistent with their belief in the law of attraction — that by the creative power of our good or bad thoughts, we draw good or bad things into our lives.

For instance, Byrne asserted:

“Often when people first hear this part of the Secret they recall events in history where masses of lives were lost, and they find it incomprehensible that so many people could have attracted themselves to the event. By the law of attraction, they had to be on the same frequency as the event. It doesn’t necessarily mean they thought of that exact event, but the frequency of their thoughts matched the frequency of the event. ... You have a choice right now. Do you want to believe that it’s just the luck of the draw and bad things can happen to you at any time? Do you want to believe that you can be in the wrong place at the wrong time? That you have no control over circumstances? Or do you want to believe and *know* that your life experience is in your hands and that only all *good* can come into your life because that is the way you think? You have a choice, and whatever you choose to think *will* become your life experience. Nothing can come into your experience unless you summon it through persistent thoughts.”⁷⁹

The clear implications of what both Vitale and Byrne shared in this part of the book were, of course, very controversial, not to mention totally lacking in compassion for those who suffer or have suffered. As more than one person noted, this makes victims of the Holocaust, a tsunami, rape,

murder, or theft, responsible for what happened to them. As odious as this teaching is, the reason for mentioning it here is simply to say that Byrne does not seem quite as explicit about expressing this logical consequence of the law of attraction in *The Power*. For those who are aware of it from the first book, they can still see the teaching in this latter book, where she wrote:

“Good feelings mean you’re on a positive frequency of love. Bad feelings mean you’re on a negative frequency. Whatever you feel, whether good or bad, determines your frequency, and like a magnet you attract the people, events, and circumstances that are on the same frequency!”⁸⁰

“Your entire life is what you have imagined it to be. Everything you have or don’t have, every situation and circumstance of your life is what you have imagined it to be. The problem is that many people imagine the worst! They’re turning the most wonderful tool against themselves. Instead of imagining the best, many people are in fear and imagine all the things that can go wrong. And as surely as they keep imagining and feeling those things, they happen.”⁸¹

“Sometimes life may throw some tricky thing my way, but I know when it happens that I attracted it to me. I always ask how I attracted any problem so I can learn from it — and so I won’t do it again!”⁸²

At one point in the book, Byrne also quotes Job 3:25, a biblical text that some teachers in the aberrational Faith movement use as “proof” that Job brought his troubles on himself through his own negativity:

“For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me.”⁸³

In short, perhaps the primary differences between *The Secret* and *The Power* seem to be that Byrne emphasizes some things in *The Power* more than she had in *The Secret* (such as the

“law of attraction” being synonymous with “the law of love”); and secondly, that, in *The Power*, she has toned down some of the extreme rhetoric that had been evident in her first book. Additionally, her second book is, arguably, not as exciting as her previous book. In the words of my beloved uncle, Thomas Burroughs, “Sequels are seldom equals.” (Although, *The Power* isn’t actually a sequel as much as it is a restatement of material she had already presented in *The Secret*.)

BYRNE’S THEOLOGY

In studying both of Byrne’s books, it is possible to derive her apparent beliefs about certain things, such as God, Jesus, man, sin, the afterlife, and the devil.

God. Byrne evidently does not believe in a personal God. Her view of God is *pantheistic* — God is everything and vice versa — and also *monistic*. She believes that everything in the universe is one.⁸⁴ The following speaks volumes concerning Byrne’s understanding of both God *and* the law of attraction:

“The Universe is the Universal supply and supplier of everything. Everything comes from the Universe, and is delivered to you *through* people, circumstances, and events, by the law of attraction. Think of the law of attraction as the law of supply. It is the law that enables you to draw from the infinite supply. When you emit the perfect frequency of what you want, the perfect people, circumstances, and events will be attracted to you and delivered! It is not people who are giving you the things you desire. If you hold that false belief, you will experience lack, because you are looking at the outside world and people as the supply. The true supply is the invisible field, whether you call that the Universe, the Supreme Mind, God, Infinite Intelligence, or whatever else. Whenever you receive anything, remember that you attracted it to you by the law of attraction, and by being on the frequency and in harmony with

the Universal Supply. The Universal Intelligence which pervades everything moved people, circumstances, and events to give that thing to you, because that is the law."⁸⁵

Jesus. In her writings, Byrne evidences no special devotion or esteem for the Lord Jesus. Incredibly, she regards Him as a "prosperity teacher" and "millionaire" who had a very "affluent lifestyle."⁸⁶ She also acknowledges Him as one of the world's "saviors;"⁸⁷ as a miracle-worker, who knew the power of gratitude;⁸⁸ one of the "great beings" (others being Buddha and Lao Tzu) who taught love;⁸⁹ and as the "Founder of Christianity."⁹⁰ Jesus seems not to be unique, in Byrne's view.

Man. Byrne obviously thinks a great deal about man. According to John Hagelin, one of the 24 teachers Byrne cites in *The Secret*, "Ultimately we are the source of the Universe ... We are the creators of the Universe."⁹¹ Additionally, as cited earlier, Byrne believes that we are "eternal energy;"⁹² "You are God in a physical body. You are Spirit in the flesh. You are Eternal Life expressing itself as You;"⁹³ and "you are an unlimited being."⁹⁴ Without a scintilla of support for her assertions,⁹⁵ she states:

"You are an eternal being living temporarily in a human body. If you stopped existing, there would be an empty space in the universe, and the whole universe would collapse into that empty space."⁹⁶

Sin. Byrne glosses over sin and any need for atonement. She says:

"You are worthy and deserving just as you are. You *are* good enough now. If you feel you have done something that wasn't right, understand that your *realization* and *acceptance* of it is absolution for the law of attraction."⁹⁷

She does believe that the law of attraction somehow punishes those who have done wrong to another person:

"If someone harms another person, the law of attraction responds unfailingly. It may use police or laws or any number of ways to give back to the person exactly what they gave, but one thing is certain with the law of attraction; we receive back what we give."⁹⁸

The afterlife. Byrne believes that all people will experience a glorious afterlife, because all of us are eternal beings.⁹⁹ Those who have died continue to exist, but they attain "the frequency of love ... the highest frequency in creation."¹⁰⁰ She asserts, "You, every person you know, and every person who has ever lived have no end!"¹⁰¹ She believes that we will have many adventures after our life on earth is over, including travel in other worlds and galaxies, all of which we will experience together.¹⁰²

The devil. According to Byrne, the enemy of man doesn't exist:

"There is no other power in life but love. There isn't a force of negativity. In ancient times, negativity was sometimes described as 'the devil' or 'evil.' Being tempted by evil or the devil simply meant being tempted to fall into negative thoughts and feelings, rather than standing firm in the positive force of love. There is no force of negativity. There is only one force, and that force is love."¹⁰³

A STUDY IN CONTRASTS: THE BIBLE VS. BYRNE

For starters, the impersonal god of Rhonda Byrne, which is more or less identified with the law of attraction, is most certainly *not* the God of the Bible. Additionally, the Bible doesn't teach the law of attraction. Instead, the Bible teaches a personal God (more on this below) Who responds to people.

There may be a few passages which would seem to support a *limited* sort of law of attraction. For example, Byrne cites Luke 6:38:

"Give, and it will be given to you ... for by your standard of mea-

sure it will be measured to you in return."¹⁰⁴

To this, we could add the previous verse which says, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37).

Or perhaps, "Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him" (Proverbs 26:27; cf. Ecclesiastes 10:8a).

However, these are precepts put in place by a personal God, not by an impersonal law. Because God, being personal, puts natural laws into place, He can at times override or suspend those natural laws. For instance, God put the law of gravity into place. Yet the Scriptures give us occurrences of God overruling that law. For example, God parted the waters of the Red Sea to allow the children of Israel to pass through dryshod (see Exodus 14:21-22);¹⁰⁵ God performed the same sort of miracle at the beginning of Joshua's ministry (Joshua 3:13-4:18); there was a time in Elisha's ministry where He caused an iron ax head to float on the top of the water (2 Kings 6:5-7); Jesus walked on water (Matthew 14:25-33); Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9), and so forth.

In fact, one might say that what we term a miracle occurs when God intervenes to override some natural law that He has put into place. However, in Byrne's system, the law of attraction is impersonal, exact, and admits of no exceptions.

God. God is personal and has a personal love for man. Indeed, God's very nature is love (1 John 4:8, 16). He is all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise, and all-good. His love motivated Him to send the Lord Jesus for our salvation (John 3:16). He blesses faith and obedience and punishes sin and disobedience.

Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and God the Son. He is also the Creator of everything that exists (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-16). He is the Savior of every sinner who trusts in Him (John 3:16; 6:40; Acts 16:31).

Man. Man is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27; James 3:9). He is a creature, *not* the Creator. Although made in the image of God, all men have turned to their own way (Isaiah 53:6). Because we are all sinners in God's sight, all men need the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:21; 3:21-22).

Sin. Sin is falling short of God's standard of perfection. It can manifest itself as active rebellion against God or passive indifference toward God. The Bible says that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The Bible also says that, "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

The afterlife. The Bible teaches the existence of heaven and hell (Matthew 25:34, 41, 46). Those who have trusted in Jesus as their Savior will spend eternity with Him. Those who have rejected Him will spend eternity in hell, which the Bible calls "the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14-15).

The devil. The devil (also known as Satan — see Revelation 12:9; Matthew 4:1, 10) is a real person, not some metaphor for "negativity." Through him, sin entered our world when our first parents, Adam and Eve, succumbed to his temptation (Genesis 3:1-7). The Bible calls him "the evil one" (Matthew 6:13; John 17:15); "the tempter" (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5); and "the accuser of our brethren" (Revelation 12:10). Two of his weapons are temptation and deception (John 8:44; Revelation 12:9; 20:3, 7-8). He also causes suffering (Job 1-2; 2 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 2:10). Of the devil, Jesus said:

"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44).¹⁰⁶

A CRITIQUE OF BYRNE AND HER LAW OF ATTRACTION

Byrne refers to her "god" as "the One Universal Mind," "the One

Mind," "The Supreme Mind,"¹⁰⁷ and "The force of love."¹⁰⁸ Indeed, she declares that "The force of love is the intelligence of life and the universe."¹⁰⁹ Byrne seems to use "the force of love" and "the law of attraction" as synonyms.¹¹⁰ Despite this, however, "the Supreme Mind," "the intelligence of life and the universe," doesn't seem very smart.

For instance, she says that the law of attraction can't understand the concept of "not."¹¹¹ If we focus on what we don't want, we will still receive it from this intelligent force, because it doesn't understand "not" or "don't want." This doesn't sound very preceptive! In fact, it rather sounds like people who *do* understand what "not" and "don't want" mean are more enlightened than "the Supreme Mind!"

Let it be clearly stated: If God is impersonal, then He is not intelligent. Only a person possesses intelligence.

It seems that the primary appeal of Byrne's teachings in both her books is at least threefold:

1. It offers people the promise of having their dreams fulfilled with very little effort on their part. In the words of one critic of the aberrational Word-Faith teaching, which shares certain similarities with Byrne's teachings:

"Seldom if ever, has there been a gospel that has promised so much, and demanded so little. The Faith gospel is a message ideally suited to the twentieth-century American Christian. ... In an economy fueled by materialism and fired by the ambitions of the 'upwardly mobile,' the Faith gospel preaches wealth and prosperity. The Faith gospel promises health and long life to a world in which death can come a myriad of different ways."¹¹²

Byrne's books might appropriately be entitled, *The Lazy Man's Guide to Obtaining Whatever You Want*.¹¹³ By contrast, the Bible teaches that it is God's will that will prevail, not man's desires (Psalm 33:10-11). In fact, we express this truth whenever we pray

the Lord's Prayer, saying, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

The 20th-century Christian apologist C.S. Lewis once observed:

"There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.'"¹¹⁴

To focus so strongly on our desires, as Byrne advocates, is to risk making our desires idols which replace our allegiance to God.

2. Byrne's omission of any real mention of sin or a need for true repentance from sin is attractive to people. No need to look to the atonement of Christ for salvation from sin, either. Byrne's "gospel" has no cross! "The offense of the cross has ceased" (see Galatians 5:11).

3. Byrne's teachings offer man the promise of people controlling their own destiny. Again, in the words of D.R. McConnell, criticizing teachers of the Word-Faith movement:

"...in an international environment characterized by anarchy, in which terrorists strike at will and nuclear holocaust can come screaming from the sky at any moment, the Faith gospel confers an authority with which the believer can supposedly exercise complete control over his or her own environment."¹¹⁵

To vainly imagine that we have complete control over our lives is a pleasant illusion, but it *is* an illusion, nonetheless. The fact is that we have very little control over what happens to us.

The idea that we have control over our own lives is also related to pride. Consider the godless pride of William Ernest Henley, who, in his poem "Invictus," wrote, "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul." And it is the same pride evident in the line from the popular song sung by Frank Sinatra, "I did it my way." It is reminiscent of the saying I once heard a Bible teacher

make, "He's a self-made man, and he worships his maker." By contrast, the Bible reminds us, "Know that the LORD, He is God; it is He Who has made us, and not we ourselves" (Psalm 100:3).

Byrne's philosophy is reminiscent of the 19th-20th century French pharmacist Émile Coué, who taught people to say, "Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better."

The law of attraction can be refuted, both biblically and through life experiences.

In the Bible, for example, we see instances where people believed things were going to happen to them, either good or bad, and those good or bad things did not happen to them. For instance, in Judges 17-18, we read of a man named Micah who set up an idol in his home and then persuaded a young Levite who was passing through to be his personal priest. After doing this, the Scripture says:

"Then Micah said, 'Now I know that the LORD will be good to me, since I have a Levite as priest!'" (Judges 17:13).

What happened to Micah in the following chapter, however, was disaster, not blessing!

Byrne quotes Job 3:25, which states, "For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me,"¹¹⁶ apparently to indicate that Job suffered the ill effects of the law of attraction. But, if this is true, Job elsewhere testified, "But when I looked for good, evil came to me; and when I waited for light, then came darkness" (Job 30:26).

This Scripture shows that the law of attraction didn't work for him here!

We can also show from life experiences that the law of attraction is a false teaching. Some examples include:

1. A man dying of thirst in the desert. He wants water so badly, he may even see a mirage. If the law of attraction were true, his thoughts and desires for water would cause there to be water.

2. A sick or dying person wanting to be well. How many sick or dying people have not received their desired healing, even though, according to the law of attraction, they should have gotten well?

3. Hypochondria is a condition where a person imagines themselves to have medical conditions, sicknesses, or diseases that they don't, in fact, have. Yet, if the law of attraction were true, these people should have those very illnesses, because they would have attracted them by their negative thoughts.

4. Unrequited love is a very well-known phenomenon. Yet, by the law of attraction, if you yearn for somebody, you should attract them to you. There are so many examples of where this didn't happen.

5. Worry is another example of the failure of the law of attraction. For instance, Mark Twain said, "I am an old man and have had many troubles, most of which never happened."¹¹⁷ Just because someone worries or fears something doesn't necessarily mean it's going to happen. Like Mark Twain, I have experiences of this also. The law of attraction would say that what we worry about will occur.

6. Paranoia is an extreme example. Just because a person believes people are out to get them doesn't make it so! Yet, by the law of attraction, it would be so.

7. A final example is daydreams. Many, if not most, people occasionally daydream. By the law of attraction, if we daydream about what we want or don't want, we should attract those things to us.

Additionally, concerning our desires, the Bible says, "The desire of the lazy man kills him, for his hands refuse to labor. He covets greedily all day long" (Proverbs 21:25-26a).

Byrne's prescription for attaining our desires amounts to two words: Wishful thinking. But wishful thinking doesn't accomplish the results we seek. There is an old saying, "If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride." But wishing for some-

thing doesn't make it so, regardless of what Byrne proclaims.

Robert M. Bowman, a critic of the aberrational Word-Faith movement, says about that teaching something that applies to Byrne's teachings as well:

"The Word-Faith teachers set people up for a fall when they tell them that God promises them that they can have what they say."¹¹⁸

Likewise, Byrne sets people up for a fall when she tells them that there is a law of attraction that guarantees people can have whatever they want simply by desiring those things and feeling good.

Endnotes:

1. Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret*. New York: Atria Books, 2006.
2. In 2007, *The Quarterly Journal* featured an article on *The Secret*. See J. Greg Sheryl, "Do You Want to Know ... *The Secret*?" *The Quarterly Journal*, October-December 2007, pp. 1, 11-21.
3. Rhonda Byrne, *The Power*. New York: Atria Books, 2010.
4. *Ibid.*, pg. xi.
5. Ron Rhodes, *Find It Quick Handbook on Cults & New Religions*. Eugene, Ore: Harvest House Publishers, 2005, pg. 134.
6. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 13, italics in original.
7. *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. 56.
8. *Ibid.*, pg. 100, capitalization in original.
9. *Ibid.*, pg. 166.
10. *Ibid.*, pg. 28.
11. *Ibid.*, pg. 31, italic in original.
12. *Ibid.*, pg. 156.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157, italic in original.
14. *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. xi.
15. *Ibid.*, pg. xii.
16. Jerry Adler, "Decoding 'The Secret,'" *Newsweek*, March 5, 2007, pg. 53.
17. Document accessed at: www.theseecret.tv/creative-biography.html and in Adobe .pdf format at: <http://images.theseecret.tv/Creative-Biography.pdf>.
18. Because *The Secret* was published in 2006, "a year ago" would have been in 2005. However, elsewhere Byrne gives the date for her crisis experience as "one night in October, 2004." See her chapter in Jack Canfield and Gay Hendricks with Carol Kline, *You've Got To Read This Book!* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006, pg. 95. In the Foreword to *The Power*, she very specifically gives the date as September 9, 2004, stating that this "is a day I will never forget." (*The Power*, op. cit., pg. ix.)

19. Byrne states that the book was *The Science of Getting Rich* by Wallace Wattles. See *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. 76; also, *The Power*, op. cit., pg. ix, footnote 1. Wattles was a New Thought author.
20. *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. ix-x, italic in original.
21. Richard Guillatt, "The secret of Rhonda's success," *The Australian*, August 23-24, 2008. Document accessed at: www.theaustralian.com.au/news/features/the-secret-of-rhondas-success/story-e6frg8h6-1111117271174.
22. Alexandra Bruce, *Beyond the Secret*. New York: The Disinformation Company Ltd., 2007, pg. 4.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
24. "Decoding 'The Secret,'" op. cit., pg. 53, italic in original.
25. *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. 76; also, *The Power*, op. cit., pg. ix.
26. *Ibid.*, pg. 81.
27. See www.theseecret.tv/gifts.html.
28. Document accessed at: www.theseecret.tv/recommended-reading.html.
29. *The American Heritage Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1985, Second College Edition, pg. 840, s.v., "New Thought."
30. D.R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995, pp. 39-40.
31. *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1993, 15th edition, Vol. 8, pg. 644, s.v., "New Thought."
32. *Ibid.*
33. *A Different Gospel*, op. cit., pg. 134, italics in original, cited (without the italics) in Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *The Word-Faith Controversy*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, pg. 52. Bowman cites the quotation from the first edition (1988) of *A Different Gospel*, where the quotation is on pg. 136.
34. *The Word-Faith Controversy*, op. cit., pg. 52, italics in original.
35. Portions of this section are taken from "Do You Want to Know ... *The Secret?*," op. cit., pg. 16.
36. *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, op. cit., pg. 644.
37. Charles and Myrtle Fillmore founded Unity; formerly called "Unity School of Christianity," which is misleading because it is not Christian; then again, neither is Christian Science. "Unity" should not be confused with two other non-Christian groups: "Unitarianism" and the "Unification Church" (a.k.a., "the Moonies").
38. James A. Beverley, *Religions A to Z*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2005, pg. 154, italics in original.
39. Glenn R. Mosley, *New Thought, Ancient Wisdom: The History and Future of the New Thought Movement*. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2006, pg. 44.
40. *Ibid.*, pg. 45.
41. *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, op. cit., pg. 644.
42. *New Thought, Ancient Wisdom*, op. cit., pg. 44.
43. *Ibid.*, pg. 132.
44. John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*. Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1999, pg. 342.
45. Larry A. Nichols, George A. Mather, and Alvin J. Schmidt, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Cults, Sects, and World Religions*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006, pg. 217, s.v., "New Thought." Formerly published as *Dictionary of Cults, Sects, Religions, and the Occult*, 1993.
46. Some researchers and writers lump Christian Science in with New Thought, but this seems imprecise and glosses over important differences between the two groups. For instance (unlike Christian Science), "New Thought does not deny the existence or reality of matter and does not shun medicine." (*The Encyclopedia Americana, International edition*. Danbury, Conn.: Grolier Incorporated, 1997, Vol. 20, pg. 228, s.v., "New Thought.")
47. *New Thought, Ancient Wisdom*, op. cit., pg. 132.
48. *A Different Gospel*, op. cit., pg. 38.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *New Thought, Ancient Wisdom*, op. cit., pp. 70-71, 136.
51. For more regrettable inconsistencies in Peale, see G. Richard Fisher, "The Father of Positive Thinking: Negative Reflections on Norman Vincent Peale," *The Quarterly Journal*, October-December 1992, pp. 4-6 and M. Kurt Goedelman, "Peale Charged With Occultic Plagiarisms," *The Quarterly Journal*, January-March 1996, pp. 3, 17.
52. *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, op. cit., pg. 343.
53. *New Thought, Ancient Wisdom*, op. cit., pp. 54-61.
54. *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, op. cit., pg. 344.
55. See *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 6.
56. *Ibid.*, pg. 11.
57. *Ibid.*, pg. 12, italic in original.
58. *Ibid.*, ellipsis in original.
59. *Ibid.*, italic in original.
60. *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. 38. She herself uses them as synonyms on the following page.
61. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 49.
62. *Ibid.*, pg. 207.
63. *Ibid.*, pg. 8.
64. See *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. 122, 172.
65. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 8.
66. *Ibid.*, pg. 9.
67. *Ibid.*, pg. 232, italic in original.
68. See *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. xii.
69. *Ibid.*, pg. 109.
70. *The Power*, op. cit., pp. 14, 21, 141.
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 192.
72. *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. 47-57, 68.
73. *The Power*, op. cit., pp. 62-79.
74. *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. 159.
75. *Ibid.*, pg. 164.
76. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 242.
77. *Ibid.*, pg. 245.
78. *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. 27-28; see also Lisa Nichols' comments on pg. 72.
79. *Ibid.*, pg. 28, italics in original.
80. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 43.
81. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.
82. *Ibid.*, pg. 230.
83. *Ibid.*, pg. 199.
84. *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. 162-163.
85. *Ibid.*, pg. 163, italic in the original.
86. *Ibid.*, pg. 109.
87. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 127.
88. *Ibid.*
89. *Ibid.*, pg. 192.
90. *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 21, 141.
91. Hagelin cited in *The Secret*, op. cit., pg. 160, quote rendered in italics in original.
92. *Ibid.*, pg. 159.
93. *Ibid.*, pg. 164.
94. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 111.
95. In both books, Byrne provides little or no documentation for many of her sweeping statements, extravagant claims, and anecdotes. Some of her statements and claims, such as this one, are patently absurd.
96. *Ibid.*, pg. 242.
97. *Ibid.*, pg. 106, italics in original.
98. *Ibid.*, pg. 234.
99. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-246.
100. *Ibid.*, pg. 242.
101. *Ibid.*, pg. 245.
102. *Ibid.*
103. *Ibid.*, pg. 235.
104. *Ibid.*, pg. 14, ellipsis in original.
105. It might be objected that God didn't override the law of gravity here because it says that the reason that the sea retreated was because of "a strong east wind." While the Bible does not say it specifically, however, there might have also been some suspension of the law of gravity involved.
106. The NASB renders this last sentence, "Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."
107. *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. 160-161, where she uses all three terms.
108. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 232.
109. *Ibid.*, italic in original.
110. *Ibid.*, pg. 50.
111. *The Secret*, op. cit., pp. 12-15, 102.
112. *A Different Gospel*, op. cit., pg. xix.
113. Thanks to my friend Steve Hazen for this observation.
114. C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*. New York: Touchstone, 1996, pg. 72, italic in original.
115. *A Different Gospel*, op. cit., pg. xix.
116. *The Power*, op. cit., pg. 199.
117. Twain cited in Roy B. Zuck, *The Speaker's Quote Book*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 2009, pg. 555.
118. *The Word-Faith Controversy*, op. cit., pg. 203. 