**Virtual Tempters **

by Gerard Feller

**A lecture on virtuality which by way of the imagination can be an opening for unreality and the occult. Given by Gerard Feller to the interdenominational workgroup “Bijbel of New Age” and transcribed by Drs. Peter Guyt.**

**Introduction**

In my function as a physiotherapist I have been especially involved in the area of psychosomatic situations in which relationships are made between physical and spiritual complaints, and having a psychiatric background. That is usually the defining model of nonChristians resulting in replacing the reductionistic model with thinking in terms of human relations. When diagnosing spiritual health, however, it is extremely important to make use of a proper, Biblical approach. In my practice I am involved with people with chronic complaints, with traumas resulting from violence and sexual misuse. In addition to that I also do pastoral therapy in order to integrate diversified matters and in this way I can go further than other counsellors. One of my recent books is “Heel de mens. Bijbels Holisme in de Gezondheidszorg”. We aim for a good balance between the things we as Christians reject and developing good alternatives.

When working with patients you encounter persons who are living in a delusion, in an other reality. Many people are living in a fantasy world in which they have fled with all their psychosomatic problems that produces, such as: fears, phobias, depressions, obsessive neuroses, schidizophrenia or m.p.s (multiple personality syndrome). Every illusionary or accessible reality will just cause them to flee further into an antichristian spiritual world or divide their personality even further. Even by “normal” citizens a life of delusion is more and more prevelant.

**Christians and reality.**

What is the sense of reality in people? Let’s start with Christians. According to Kurt Blatter they are complicated people because they live in two realities, namely the spiritual and the worldly reality. On the one side you believe numerous things as a Christian: for example you claim to be pure in Christ, that you are walking in heaven and that you live close to the Lord. But the earthly reality is you have imperfections and that comes into conflict with what you as a believer profess. Thus there exists tension with reality. This often produces escapism. In some cases the reaction goes to a form of spiritual reality and this results in extreme spirituality. One talks about how the Lord speaks to them repeatedly but at the same time this has no effect on their role in their marriage, in their work, in their place in society. This is in many ways a form of schidizphrenia. The individual interprets his own experiential situation differently than some one else would do. For example, he says that the problems come because we are living in the last days, since we are engaged in a serious spiritual battle. Actually that is to a certain extent true, but it also amounts to neglecting one’s own responsibilities. That is a poor testimony for a Christian. Unbelievers see clearly the insincerity of a life that is not consistent with a confession of faith, because most surely in this post-modern era others are noticing not only what is said, but also how one acts.

It is also possible to swing to worldly reality. Spiritual life has been practically eliminated. Faith has almost no more place in life. The individual doubts being born-again, questions the existence of God, confesses the same sins day after day, and makes no progress whatsoever.

The Bible speaks about tensions. Man is not yet perfect. We strive for holiness and spiritual growth, but there must always be Biblical balance. We need to do this in a relaxed manner under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

**(Post) Modernism and reality.**

How does modernism describe reality? The truth, reality, is a description of that which exists; a lie is related to that which does not exist. Postmodernism, which you could call philosophical relationism, says that truth is subjective, depending on the culture and mans perception. Reality is that which is real for you. There is no objective norm; recognition of a norm is relative. There is no such thing as sin, salvation is not needed, except for selfdeliverance. Sadly, post- modernism has penetrated into the church.

Biblical reality says that post modern thinkers are correct in the sense that our spirit and our words are too limited and therefore are not capable of comprehending that which is outside our experience and senses. This is why we need the Word of God, the Logos, the Living Word. Hebrews 11:1 and 3 says: “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Jesus said: “I am the way, the truth and the life: John 14:6

The evil one tries to loosen man from the truth of Christ, and by deluding him with a different reality brings him into an unreality where there is no light from God. People get mislead into believing a strange image of god, a different view of the world and a different view of mankind than what the Bible teaches. This brainwashing by the evil one has been happening extensively in the last century. Think about Mao and the cultural revolution. In so-called alternative farms people were depersonalized. In our present society we encounter the influence of other reality in the media, in healthcare, in culture, in art forms, in politics. People are unconsciously manipulated in their thinking. The evil one tries to transport man into unreality by means of virtuality. Virtuality is the intermediate world through which man is lead by steps into a demonic world. This world is presided over by the ruler of this age, satan. He imitates the Church of God wilth sects and new age networks. He even attempts to produce a unreal christ in the form of the antichrist. The final result will be that the world calls upon this super-virtual christ, the antichrist (anti=in the place of Christ) when the virtual world climate is ripe for this.

**Consciousness and reality**

How does the process of changing consciousness work. One must first be brought into contact with something (initiation). That can happen passively, but also by active participation, for example you place yourself under the treatment of an occult healer. The next step is discovering and exploring, leading to assimilation and realisation of the effect, and with that begins a different view of life, a different consciousness.

There are varying techniques for changing conscience, for example hypnosis, which is like a trance or sleeping experience with lessened consciousness, which allows the ability of the conscience to be critically influenced or even controlled by another power or person. In this case suggestion, verbal influence and a minimizing of contact with the body by way of psychological activity are involved. A person who is hypnotized cannot discern the difference between reality and imagination, between his own thoughts and those of another. One who is hypnotized can get the idea that they have experienced sexual traumas because the therapist suggests that as a possibility. Or a person can, for example, easily start believing in reincarnation if the hypnotist takes the patient back into a so-called former life. A person’s will can be influenced or manipulated. When one is hypnotized he comes under the bondage of another and is therefore somewhat in his might. That is against God’s will, Who has created man with his own will. The perception of the past can be taken away or changed like happens with, for instance, Rostelli. People start remembering things that they never experienced. This same thing happens to people who say they have been kidnapped by so-called extraterrestial beings. The German psychologist, Jung, who was a follower of Taoism, placed the conscious experience of man in either a conscious or unconscious sphere. This is actually experienced by everyone, for example, driving a car happens partially automatically via the unconscious state. You don’t actually consciously think about each action or at least you don’t do or experience each action consciously. In addition to the unconscious Jung also divided the so-called collective unconsciousness, namely that in every person the experience and knowledge of former generations of humanity has been stored. That would be an enormous reservoir of all sorts of information that would be available to each person, under the condition that they could access this in some way, for example through various forms of consciousness transformation techniques such as hypnotic trances, trance-induction, auto-trance, metafors, visualisation (which often occurs in Satanism), guided fantasies (used in therapy and education), floating (making decisions based on intuition), transcendental meditation, emdr (eye movement desensitation and relaxation; some question if this should be included in this list), Silva mind control (often done as self-hypnotisation), etc. Crossing the border between unconsciousness and collective unconsciousness is dangerous because this is entering the world of satan’s darkness. We need to recognize the difference between this collective unconsciousness and other forms of collectivity which we encounter in society where man is a social collective being as seen, for example, in companionship.

**N.L.P.**

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) (see ‘Tovenaars van de 20th century’, page 266 through 277, and ‘New Age, Esoterie en Evangelie’, page 54 through 72) is seen as a tool to work on the unconsciousness of man and to give man a different perception. Of itself it’s not wrong to critically examine a perception and then to change a wrong view. The problem with NLP is that it works with the unconscious. Not only is a proper command of language involved, but one can also differentiate types of people. Through the use of trance they use a timeline-analysis to produce an out-of-the-body situation and introduce wrong things from the past in order to eliminate them or change the personal history while reliving it. An effort is made during trance to repair the negative characters of parents (reparenting), or to change the out-of-the-body future, possibly in a future life (changing personal future). This quickly makes one think of the computer function of “deleting” and inserting something else in its place. In this way man resembles a computer. And then you arrive quickly in the virtual, imaginary world. Man then endeavors to form himself in his own model, for example with the attributes of Einstein. By in this way calling on the spirit of Einstein one enters the field of demonism involving channelling and spiritism. The next step is that man creates himself via cloning. The modern man sees himself even as god.?!

**F.R.P. and reality.**

A new form of playing is the so-called fantasy-role-playing (FRP). There is no game board; this exists in the fantasy of the players, and a leader who watches out for the rules of the game. In the story each player represents a person whose name is written on a piece of paper. They play a role. In the story the players are confronted with a problem or event to which they then must react as the person they represent. They can be either good or bad characters. Most times they choose to be a bad character because in that case you don’t have to pay attention to all sorts of ethical rules. The script of the story often comes from books with a basic story, for example an imaginary story about knights in the medieval times, or a mythological world, the underworld, a magical world, a heavenly world and more of the same. Often there are fantasy stories which can be downloaded from the internet with which the games can be played. More and more there are occult scripts to be found there. Also television series involving occult thrillers form the basis for a game. The players in the game can then be people, giants, dwarfs, magicians, witches, spirit-beings, apparitions, etc. The games last not just an hour, but can go on for years even. A person can become one with the role image and thus no more know who he really is. To evaluate the game one needs to be aware of the moral content of the game. Are there morals and principles involved? Furthermore you must not reject the power of the imagination, because God created man with the ability to think of things, but you must always be aware that there is a boundary between good and constructive fantasy and negative and destructive fantasy. Even Jesus warned for the danger of wrong fantasies, for example in Matthew 5:28 and 29. There we read:” But I say unto you, whosoeverlooked on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not the whole body be cast into hell.” You can be unclean in your thoughts, in your fantasy. And your thoughts are a part of your personality. This means that you can’t say. “I’m only thinking it, it is not reality.” This lets us see that fantasy does not specifically involve thinking about that which in reality does not exist, but also it also involves that which does really exist, and one can recall it out of his memory.

**Education and reality**.

There are also possible dangers in education and upbringing. Sometimes children have to learn things in a funny way. Not so much things learned by memory, but their steps into another world, where ”you can experience lots more things.” The teacher says, for example, “We are going to just relax and in our minds we are going to take a trip. We get into an imaginary airplane and fly to a deserted island where we do lots of other things.” It is very suggestive. Dr. Franzke discovered that with this kind of fantasy-trips it involves an out-of-the-body experience. Problems can occur when re-entering. It can happen that a kind of hypnotism needs to be broken in order to return to reality. This type of method. i.e. the writing dance, is sometimes used to teach writing. Still another method is used for learning numbers. For example, the erect 1 is taught to be a witch who sells new brooms. The broom is erect and the witch can fly straight into the air on it. In this fashion the world of writing is right at the start coupled on the world of witches!

“Sjamanisn” is also very popular. A sjamanist is originally a witchdoctor, who by using all sorts of required mantra-type rituals brings himself into ectase and comes out of his body and enters into a different reality. This happens sometimes with animals as the guiding spirit. The oftener one “leaves” the body, the easier it becomes. The so-called neo-sjamanism is coupled to nature religion, which is what witches propagate. This appears to be harmless and soft, but it is very deceptive. The anthropologist Carlos Castenada has written several books about primitive people, for example in the Amazon, and he discovered that hallucinating products from the nature, such as pados (mushrooms) were used to come in contact with the spiritual world.

**Virtual Reality**

The unreal reality can be reached not only by way of medicine, trance, etc but also with the aid of the computer (virtual reality = imagined reality). A computer can create a virtual space in which the user can function in a digitally created surrounding and can operate in an experience that is real. The user wears a visiohelmet with three dimensional images which are given instructions through the computer. Stereo headsets can produce high quality spatial sounds. Sensors on the helmet register movements of the head allowing the computer to determine the angle of vision and create new images. By wearing special gloves and movement sensors the screen can show moving fingers which appear to be on the user’s own hands. In this way it is possible to ‘grasp’ electronically produced objects which appear to be real, turn switches on and off, start motors, move handles, operate machines and operate on a virtual patient. The user can even wear a special datasuit that transmits all the movements of the body to the computer. Different people in different places can ‘enter’ the same cyberspace, ‘see’ each other, ‘touch’ each other or react to each other and virtually meet each other. One can ‘virtually clone’ himself and be in different places at once. Cybersex and ‘exchanging selves’ will possibly be developed as the most important form of amusement in the future.

Two VR (virtual reality) authors (Jaron Lanier and Franc Biocca) wrote to each other,”I think that one of the most obvious forms of a virtual worldsystem in which the freedom, the possibility of choice exists to change the content of the world in a split second is that the difference between your own body and the rest of the world is not definite.

When you view it from a VR perspective the body is principally defined as that part which you can cause to move as quickly as you can think. In a virtual world you can open doors at a distance in ‘real time’, cause a volcano far away to erupt and whatever else you can think of. When you have reached that place it is no longer easy to determine the limits of the body.

**Dangers of Virtual Reality**

Man apparently has developed himself as a being that has control (autonomy) of his surroundings. The world seems to have gotten smaller and man seems to have acquired godly attributes such as power to create, gaining of omnipresence, and losing the limitations of his body and existence. He begins to think: “I am god”.

Man is overcome by the worldly concepts of materialism, reductionism, symbolism and evolution, in which he departs more and more from the realisation that we are living in God’s world and have the responsibility toward Him how we conduct ourselves, how we relate to others and to His creation. Man is not aware that he is wandering further and further from the true God. An identity crisis comes into existence due to the fact that the difference between “I” and the rest of the world, between reality and non-reality, between space and the limits of time, fades and vanishes more and more. This crisis becomes even more serious when man begins to think that he exists as numerous personalities (identities).

As a result of computer usage the border between reality and delusion (virtualiteit) has become more and more vague. The VR technology is still rather primitive, but is developing explosively. With ever faster computers it is easier to shorten the passage of time (qua time and space) between the intention and the execution or even to reduce it to ‘real time’. Everything can be done. Man is continually looking for ways to escape the reality. It is already one of the biggest problems in national health care that people are living in a delusion. And this shall undoubtedly get worse.

**Christians and virtual tempters.**

Which answers do we have as Christians to these developments? It is important that we always integrate the earthly and spiritual reality by being different in word and work, and that we are a living testimony of the hope that lives in us through Jesus Christ. Paul gives us a good picture of this is I Thess. 2:1-12: ”For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict. For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit. But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness––God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

We may know our identity in Christ (Colossians 1:9 and 10; Ephesians 4:17) and grow in spiritual discernment. We may live a sanctified life and show forth the image of Christ. We don’t have to isolate ourselves but stand strong in the middle of society as a salting salt.

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translated by Herb Boyd

Scripture verses quoted from the New King James Bible, Oxford University Press 1967