

Just the Facts: Della Reese

Della Reese is not a Christian pastor as, many might assume, or as she might present herself. Rather, she is a follower, and minister of the principles of, New Thought as clearly indicated on the website of her Church, Understanding Principles for Better Living Church. Her Church bio, and that of her Assistant Minister, is quite telling, as to where she is coming from "spiritually":

"The Reverend Della Reese-Lett, Minister and Founder

In 1987 Della Reese-Lett, world famous singer, actress and television personality, was ordained as a minister by the Universal Foundation for Better Living, an organization of twenty-two member churches and study groups worldwide, founded by The Reverend Doctor Johnnie Coleman. Reverend Della, as she is lovingly called, founded Understanding Principles for Better Living Church (UP) in Los Angeles, California in order to provide others with the opportunity to know members of UP Church are able to share the wisdom, revelations, and inspirations of one of this country's great spiritual leaders. Her lesson/sermons, based upon the teachings of Jesus Christ, give all who are seeking practical ways to learn and apply the Principles that will allow them to have a better life." <http://www.upchurch.org/ministers.htm>

"The Reverend Doctor Charles O. Brown D.D.

Teacher, Lecturer, Counselor, Advisor, and Entrepreneur are all titles which have been earned by this world traveler who now serves as an Assistant Minister for Understanding Principles for Better Living Church, where the Rev. Della Reese Lett is the Minister/Founder.

Dr. Charles, or "Doc" as he is lovingly known, grew up and received his early education in Los Angeles, California. He is a graduate of the Chouinard Institute of the Arts where he mastered the skills that led to the founding of several companies, including Unique Gifts, Designs by Charlie and Mishra, Inc. (Importers of his original designs and home furnishings with offices in Bombay and New Delhi as well as Los Angeles).

As Charles was mastering the business world, he was also mastering the world of spiritual studies. He has done extensive course work in Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Judaic Christianity, Islam and Yoruba. These studies led to his ordination in 1980 and the awarding of the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the First Assembly of Christ School of Theology and Metaphysical Science."

http://www.upchurch.org/ministers_brown.htm

[Comment: while Reese claims her sermons are based on Jesus' teachings, New Thought is definitely not Christian. Note the diversity of religions appealed to by her Assistant Minister.]

From "What We Believe" on Della's Church website:

"The adherents of New Thought worship the omnipresent God, the indwelling God, in whom we live, move, and have our being. They do not conceive of God as distant or separated from man, but as a universal Spirit permeating all nature, finding its highest expression in man."

No better conception of the God of New Thought can be expressed than was given by Pythagoras to the world six centuries before the Christian era. Listen to the great message:

"God is the Universal Spirit that diffuses itself over all nature. All beings receive their life from Him. There is but one only God, who is not, as some are apt to imagine, seated above the world, beyond the orb of the universe; but being Himself all in all, He sees all the beings that fill His immensity, the only principle the light of heaven, the father of all. He produces everything. He orders and disposes of all things. He is the reason, the life and motion of all things."

New Thought teaches that the revelation of God to man is a continuous process through nature, through reason, the whispering of intuition through the events and experiences of life. ...the desire to come into harmony with God.

To teach man to come into a conscious realization of the divinity within, and the unity of man and God, so that out of the sublimity of his soul he can say with the Gentle Master, "The Father and I are one," is the supreme purpose and meaning of New Thought."

http://www.upchurch.org/about_new_thought.htm

[Comment: As the above text, from her website, indicates – the teachings of New Thought concerning the nature of God are vastly different from those of the Christian Church.]

The following quote from the autobiography of Della Reese, *Angels Along the Way: My Life with Help from Above*, helps to further clarify her view of salvation, man, and God. In Chapter 13 of her book, Reese states:

"I don't teach that there is one way and one way only to salvation, nor that one denomination is more truthful than another....I teach that you don't have to call God what I call Him in order to be in touch with Him. Or Her. I teach that Father/Mother God loves you with infinite love and loves to hear from you and talk to you no matter what's on your mind."

Her Church continues to be part of the Universal Foundation for Better Living, an umbrella organization of approximately 20 affiliated churches, begun by Reese's mentor – Johnnie Coleman – who pastors Christ Universal Temple, in Chicago. Coleman was previously associated with the Unity School of Christianity (a New Age Church/Metaphysical Church). The Temple teaches that people can attain their highest good by listening to the "still small voice" within us."

As does Unity School of Christianity, and other New Thought Churches, Reese's Church and doctrinal beliefs are much more at home in what is commonly referred to as the New Age Movement, than in the Christian Church.

For additional information visit our website at [and search for articles on the New Age Movement.](http://www.upchurch.org/about_new_thought.htm)