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# DISCERNMENT NEWSLETTER

“...how is it that ye do not discern this time?” Luke 12:56

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## MAINSTREAMING MYSTIC MINDEDNESS: Eastern Meditation as the Universal Cure-All

By Gaylene Goodroad

*“For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob,  
Because they are filled with influences from the east...”*

(Isaiah 2:6)

### BEATLEMANIA AND EASTERN MYSTICISM

When the Beatles helped to bring Transcendental Meditation (TM) into vogue in the 1960s, few could imagine then that the mystical Hindu practice would endure beyond the hippie generation and become commonplace today from the elementary school classroom to the Christian church.

What modern meditators might not know is that the “Fab Four” learned Eastern meditation from Hindu guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Upon his death in 2008, a CBS News article recapped the Maharishi’s dark contribution to the world:

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a guru to the Beatles who introduced the West to **transcendental meditation**, died Tuesday at his home in the Dutch town of Vlodrop, a spokesman said. He was thought to be 91 years old... Once dismissed as **hippie mysticism, the Hindu practice of mind control known as transcendental meditation** gradually gained medical respectability. He began teaching TM in 1955 and brought the technique to the United States in 1959. But the movement really took off after the Beatles attended one of his lectures in 1967. Maharishi retreated last month into silence at his home on the grounds of a former Franciscan monastery, saying he wanted to dedicate his remaining days to studying **the ancient Indian texts that underpin his movement**... With the help of celebrity endorsements, Maharishi - a Hindi-language title for Great Seer - parlayed his interpretations of **ancient scripture** into a multi-million-dollar global empire. His roster of famous meditators ran from Mike Love of the Beach Boys to Clint Eastwood and Deepak Chopra, a new age preacher. After 50 years of teaching, Maharishi turned to larger themes, with grand designs to harness the power of **group meditation** to create world peace and to mobilize his devotees to banish poverty from the earth.

Note that the Maharishi’s “Hindu practice of mind control” was mined from “the ancient Indian texts” (i.e., the Vedas & Upanishads) and not the Holy Bible.

TM.org, a website devoted to promoting the guru’s Transcendental Meditation, quotes its founder, the Maharishi, who admits candidly that the goal of the mystical practice is to achieve “the state of enlightenment”—which is an altered state of consciousness wherein the meditator realizes his/her own divinity.

Harvard trained Ph.D., Candy Gunther Brown, a Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University, highlights this troubling history of TM in her 2013 book, *The Healing Gods: Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Christian America*:

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (c. 1918-2008) popularized the practice of **Transcendental Meditation (TM)** in 1960s America...In 1975, Time magazine pictured the Maharishi on its cover and described TM as ‘the turn-on of the ‘70s—a drugless high that even the narc squad might enjoy’... **A goal of TM is realizing one’s unity with the divine.**

Dr. Brown’s synopsis of TM is sadly correct. This journey to occult enlightenment takes the meditator into an altered state of consciousness—“a drugless high that even the narc squad might enjoy”—a practice that the Bible condemns (Deut. 18:9-13; 2 Ki. 17:7-9; Rom. 12:2).

Note how enticing the TM website describes this “drugless high”: “The TM technique allows your mind to *easily* settle inward, through quieter levels of thought, until you experience the most silent and peaceful level of your own awareness — pure consciousness.” There is no thinking, only feeling. Rather than relying on rational faculties, the meditator focuses upon *the mystical experience*. Eastern meditation is occult mysticism. It is a practice that is diametrically opposed to *Sola Scriptura*: objective truth that the Lord God spoke—breathed—into His Word, the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16).

### MARKETING MYSTICISM AS MEDICALLY BENEFICIAL

Through the decades since the British music invasion to America, savvy change agents have successfully marketed Eastern meditation to modern consumers—including American Christians—seeking relief from the mounting stress of day-to-day life and temporary escape from a mind-muddling world.

Eastern meditation is listed among several once-taboo practices that Dr. Brown refers to in her book as complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). She claims that meditation (and other previously questionable practices) has become mainstream in our culture primarily due to its touted therapeutic benefits:

“The recent integration of CAM into the mainstream health-care market and conservative Christian subculture is an extra-ordinary development. Before the 1960s, most of the practices considered in this book—yoga, chiropractic, acupuncture, Reiki, Therapeutic Touch, **meditation**, martial arts, homeopathy, and anti-cancer regimens—if encountered at all, were generally dismissed as medically and religiously questionable. Conventional medical doctors disparaged CAM as quackery, and Christian clergy

denounced CAM as idolatry because it seemed tainted by 'Eastern' religions or 'New Age' spirituality."

This "extra-ordinary development" of the "recent integration of CAM into the mainstream health-care market and conservative Christian subculture" is borne out on the TM website, copyrighted by the Maharishi Foundation USA, which promotes this Eastern practice to westerners by underscoring to the so-called health benefits of TM:

Extensive peer-reviewed published research on the TM technique has found a wide range of wellness benefits including:

- greater inner calm throughout the day
- reduced cortisol (the "stress hormone")
- normalized blood pressure
- reduced insomnia
- lower risk of heart attack and stroke
- reduced anxiety and depression
- improved brain function and memory

To learn more, contact your local certified TM teacher.

Besides citing research by the National Institutes of Health, the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the American College of Cardiology, the TM website boasts celebrity endorsements from Jerry Seinfeld, Ellen DeGeneres, and George Stephanopoulos, anchor of ABC's *Good Morning America*. It also includes testimonials from the Mayo and Cleveland clinics.

All of these Eastern meditation promoters disarm detractors of TM by denying its religious occult roots. TM is peddled to our pragmatic society as simple, healthful, and enjoyable:

It's [TM] a simple, natural technique practiced 20 minutes twice each day while sitting comfortably with the eyes closed. The TM technique is easy to learn and enjoyable to practice, and is **not a religion**, philosophy, or lifestyle. Over six million people have learned it — people of all ages, cultures, and religions.

Contrary to the disclaimer that "it is not a religion", Transcendental Meditation was indeed birthed in the depths of the occult realm.

### TAPPING DEEP OCCULT ROOTS

Directly opposed to biblical teaching, Eastern religions teach that "God" (or divinity) transcends all creation and is also imminent *in* all creation (which is called *panentheism*). According to this false teaching, within every human soul lies an "inner divinity", "higher self", "higher consciousness", "divine spark", "Atman," divine Presence," etc. — **that can only be recognized or awakened through meditation (Eastern mysticism)**. This spiritual awakening is called, "self-realization", "cosmic consciousness", "enlightenment", "samadhi," etc.

Christian researcher and author, Ray Yungen, also links this philosophy to occultist Alice Bailey:

It was Alice Bailey (the famous occult prophetess who coined the term New Age), who made this startling assertion: It is, of course, easy to find many passages which link the way of the Christian Knower with that of his brother in the East. They bear witness to **the same efficacy of method** [i.e. meditation]. What did she mean by the term "Christian Knower"? The answer is unmistakable! ...

**[O]ccultism is awakening the mystical faculties to see God in everything.** In Hinduism, this is called reaching samadhi or enlightenment. It is the final objective of yoga meditation: **God in everything – a force or power flowing through all that exists....**

Crystal Love, New Age author and mystic, ties all of these unbiblical teachings to one of the oldest bundle of occult writings penned by the mythical prophet, Hermes Trismegistus:

"In the ancient Egyptian texts of **The Hermetica** it is also written that God is Oneness and that **everything is part of one Supreme Being – an invisible universal consciousness, or mind** – which has created all things from an original impulse, and yet which also resides **within all of creation** simultaneously [panentheism]."

The medieval alchemists encapsulated this monistic belief into the phrase "As above, so below," meaning that there is no transcendent God above (as in the personal God of the Bible), but that 'All is One' or divine (called Pantheism). From these occult ideas come some of the darkest practices forbidden by the God of the Bible. In her book, *The Mystic Mind*, Crystal Love talks about a "spiritual revival" and "revolution" of these things in our day, purportedly supported by Quantum Spirituality. Love also links all of these things with the "untapped power and potential of the Mystic Mind" which, in the occult view, ties human consciousness (i.e., the mystic mind) with that "one Supreme Being—an invisible universal consciousness, or mind," or God "force or power flowing through all that exists". As above, so below:

... [W]e are witnessing **a spiritual revival and revolution** which is happening at the grass roots level of society as a whole, and which appears to be a culture in its own right, regardless of the views of either scientific or traditional religious thought and dogma. Astrology, healing, telepathy and ESP, the out-of-body and near-death experience, as well as reincarnation and past life regression, have become bridges to a new religion... it is modern science, particularly quantum physics that is now inadvertently offering verifiable scientific information on the nature of the universe and **the validity of the mystical and supernatural**. This can surely only lend support to a growing body of evidence, which...will soon come to **confirm the unity in all things**, and the amazing **untapped power and potential of The Mystic Mind**.

According to Love, the vehicle to "untapping the power and potential of The Mystic Mind" is Eastern *meditation*:

The word **'Mystic'** originally comes from the Greek word for 'mystery' – meaning 'the unexplainable' – whose own root word means quite simply, **'with closed eyes'**. According to mystic philosophy, one cannot gain a full understanding of God, the nature of the universe, or indeed the 'Self', [i.e., 'higher self'] by external or physical means alone since God, religion and spirituality **all exist within our own selves**, within our own souls. By 'closing the eyes' and shutting out the external physical world of the five senses through introspection, **meditation** or prayer, a divine union with God, vision or revelation may be experienced by the individual...The mystical journey is, by its very nature, **a journey into the self**, and a journey ultimately made alone.

Love explains what happens during this solo mystical journey:

To access this immense unconscious data bank of information we have to switch-off the intellectual apparatus, the medium for conscious thought and perception – the left brain. We have to delude it, literally hypnotise [sic] it – lull it into a non-active phase. As soon as we have shut this door, as soon as we put the conscious mind to rest, to sleep, the other door – the door into the unconscious – opens.

Herein lies the danger of entering into altered states of consciousness. What happens when the "intellectual apparatus" is "switched off"—when it is "deluded", "lulled into a non-active phase" or "hypnotized"? What foreboding entities might lurk where the "door into the unconscious opens"? Pastor Larry DeBruyn warned Christians, who flirt with these same mystical practices under the pretense of prayer, about some disturbing possibilities in a recent article, titled, "Who Goes There? Encountering Voices in Contemplative Prayer":

That contemplative spiritualists engage in practices that by their own admission expose them to the influence of Satan's voice is troubling. Scripture admonishes believers, "Neither give place [i.e., an opportunity] to the devil" (Ephesians 4:27). But in his advocacy of contemplative prayer, Richard Foster admits that **Satan may seize the silence as an occasion to speak**. He states:

I also want to give a word of precaution. In the silent contemplation of God we are entering deeply into the spiritual realm, and **there is such a thing as supernatural guidance that is not divine guidance**... there are various orders of spiritual beings, and some of them are definitely not in cooperation with God and his way!

What might Satan be saying to the meditator as he "seizes the silence"? In stark contrast to Eastern meditation, Christian meditation involves an active and engaged mind—not one that has been switched into neutral and vulnerable to demonic entities. Christians 'meditate' by 'pondering' or 'thinking deeply' about God's Word—NOT by 'emptying their mind' and entering into an altered state of consciousness. "*When I remember You*

*on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches... (Ps. 63:6).*" (See also: Ps. 4:4; 104:34; 119:97).

But regardless of these very real and spiritually dangerous concerns, Eastern meditation is revolutionizing our culture at an alarming rate—and our young people are in the bullseye of TM marketers.

#### **TM AND 'CONSCIOUSNESS-BASED EDUCATION'**

Hollywood director David Lynch is an ardent disciple of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and is behaving as his chief TM apostle. Noted for work on such films as *The Elephant Man* and *Blue Velvet*, the hit television series *Twin Peaks*, and television commercials for Calvin Klein and Dior, Lynch now runs a foundation devoted to "Consciousness-based Education" to ensure that children everywhere can freely learn and practice Transcendental Meditation—especially within the public school system:

I started **Transcendental Meditation** in 1973 and have not missed a single meditation ever since. Twice a day, every day. It has given me effortless access to unlimited reserves of energy, creativity and happiness deep within. This level of life is sometimes called "**pure consciousness**"—it is a treasury. And this level of life is deep within us all. But I had no idea how powerful and profound this technique could be until I saw firsthand how it was being **practiced by young children in inner-city schools**, veterans who suffer the living hell of post-traumatic stress disorder and women and girls who are victims of terrible violence. **TM** is, in a word, life changing for the good. In 2005, we started the David Lynch Foundation for **Consciousness-Based Education** and World Peace to ensure that every child anywhere in the world who wanted to learn to **meditate** could do so. Now, the Foundation is actively teaching **TM** to adults and children in countries everywhere. How are we able to do it? Because of the generosity of foundations and philanthropists and everyday people who want to ease the suffering of others—and who want to help create a better world. If you don't already meditate, take my advice: Start. It will be the best decision you ever make.

A few of the "everyday people" who have joined Lynch in promoting his TM gospel are celebrities such as Gwyneth Paltrow, Ellen DeGeneres, Russell Simmons, Katy Perry, Susan Sarandon, Candy Crowley, Soledad O'Brien, George Stephanopoulos, Russell Brand, Howard Stern, Laura Dern, Clint Eastwood, Jerry Seinfeld, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr. Here is the short list of other celebrity meditators: Demi Moore, Hugh Jackman, Jennifer Aniston, Burt Reynolds, Mary Tyler Moore, Halle Berry, Jane Fonda, Martin Scorsese, Jeff Bridges, Mick Jagger, Angelina Jolie, Kourtney Kardashian, Sheryl Crow, Shirley Maclaine, Jeff Goldblum, Cameron Diaz, Mariel Hemingway, Eva Mendes, Rupert Murdoch, Robin Roberts, Ivanka Trump, Liv Tyler, Tina Turner, Steven Seagal, Richard Gere, Sting, and Arnold Schwarzenegger

An insidious core feature of Lynch's Consciousness-Based Education program is what he calls "Quiet Time".

His spurious terminology makes occult mysticism sound like nap time for preschoolers. Note again the deception, as Lynch beguiles his critics by affirming that TM “does not involve any religion”:

**The Transcendental Meditation technique:**

Transcendental Meditation, **the core intervention of the Quiet Time Program**, is a simple, easily learned technique, practiced by students and teachers while sitting comfortably with the eyes closed. **It does not involve any religion, philosophy, or change in lifestyle.** Over 340 published scientific studies document its effectiveness for improving health and learning. This approach has been adopted by hundreds of public, private and charter schools worldwide—with strong support from students, parents and educators.

Astonishingly, Transcendental Meditation is now being widely embraced by educators and parents who are charged with protecting children—but who are instead exposing young people to this occult practice.

**“O” IS FOR ‘OM’**

But all of the famous people listed above cannot match the notoriety or reach of New Age evangelist, Oprah Winfrey. Winfrey and her former health expert on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, Dr. Mehmet Oz, have been hugely effective spokespersons for TM—using the massive scope of their television audiences, print media, and the Internet to promote this particular flavor of Eastern mysticism. Oprah just recently teamed up with New Age guru, Deepak Chopra, for an online ‘21-day Meditation Experience’. This already burgeoning celebrity TM network is growing.

**‘MINDFULNESS’: SAME OCCULT ROOT**

In February of 2014, *TIME* magazine ran the cover story, “The Mindful Revolution: The science of finding focus in a stressed-out, multi-tasking culture”, which is just a clever repackaging of the TM popularized by the Maharishi. “Mindfulness” meditation finds its roots in Buddhism, while TM stems from Hinduism. In the article, the author notes once again that ‘mindfulness’ meditation promoters deny any connection that this mystical practice has to Eastern religion and instead focus upon its purported health benefits:

... Some of this may sound like a New Age retread of previous prescriptions for stress. **Mindfulness is rooted in Eastern philosophy, specifically Buddhism.** But two factors set it apart and give it a practical veneer that is helping propel it into the mainstream. One might be thought of as smart marketing. [Jon] **Kabat-Zinn and other proponents are careful to avoid any talk of spirituality when espousing mindfulness.** Instead, they advocate a commonsense approach: think of your attention as a muscle. As with any muscle, it makes sense to exercise it (in this case, with **meditation**), and like any muscle, it will strengthen from that exercise....

Jon Kabat-Zinn, the father of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) holds a medical Ph.D., but after attending a meditation lecture by a Zen master in the early 1970s, became a guru of Eastern meditation in an effort to help his patients alleviate stress and pain:

**Jon Kabat-Zinn**, the father of MBSR [mindfulness-based stress reduction], doesn’t look like the kind of person to be **selling meditation and mindfulness to America’s fast-paced, stressed-out masses.** When I met him at a mindfulness conference in April, he was dressed in corduroys, a button-down shirt and a blazer, with wire-rimmed glasses and a healthy head of thick gray hair. He looked more like the professor he trained to become than the **mindfulness guru** he is.

But ultimately, a professor may prove more valuable than a guru in spreading the word on mindfulness. The son of an immunologist and an artist, Kabat-Zinn, now 69, was earning a doctorate in molecular biology at MIT in the early 1970s when he attended a lecture **about meditation given by a Zen master.** “It was very moving. I started meditating that day,” he says. “And the more I meditated, the more I felt like there was something else missing that science could say in terms of, like, how we live as human beings.”

By 1979, Kabat-Zinn had earned his Ph.D. and was working at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center studying muscle development and teaching anatomy and cell biology to medical students. On a meditation retreat that year, he had a revelation. What if he could use **Buddhism-based meditation** to help patients cope with conditions like chronic pain? Even if he couldn’t alleviate their symptoms, Kabat-Zinn speculated that mindfulness training might help patients refocus their attention so they could change their response to pain and thereby reduce their overall suffering.

But, what if “Buddhism-based meditation” draws patients into the occult world and away from the God of the Bible—regardless of whether or not it helps them cope with pain or reduces their physical suffering?

**MINDUP™: ‘MINDFULNESS’ FOR CHILDREN**

Actress Goldie Hawn, known mainly for her comedic roles spanning a half century, has become a formidable prophetess of Mindfulness meditation to this generation of young people. In a 2013 YouTube video posted by the Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education, Hawn admits to deceptively smuggling Eastern meditation into the public school system under the guise of enhanced brain health. Again, like the many meditators before her, Hawn denies publicly that the meditation she’s peddling to children is linked to religion (i.e., Buddhism):

We have to be able to teach our children how their brains work. We have to be able to bring **contemplative practice** into the classroom—**under a different name**—because obviously people would say, “Oh, **meditation**,” they think or “Oh, this is Buddhist, or this is whatever.” Well, His Holiness [referring to the Dalai Lama] absolutely doesn’t have any denomination in this. I mean, when he said

‘educate the mind and heart’ **he’s not talking about religion**. He’s talking about the right practice [i.e., meditation], that creates the right neurological firing, that creates new pathways in the brain, that create a better outlook on life. And that’s what we want to teach our children in school.

Hawn’s statement, “‘His Holiness’ absolutely doesn’t have any denomination in this,” is a blatant lie. The Dalai Lama claims to be the 14<sup>th</sup> incarnation of the original Buddha—a Buddhist deity. He is known as the Tibetan ‘god-king’, a title which denies the distinctive exclusivity of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only God-King (2 Pet. 1:1; 1 Jn. 4:2; 1 Tim. 6:14-16; Rev. 19:16).

The ‘meditation’ that Hawn is selling comes directly out of the Buddhist false religion; and this is what she and others are teaching children in school. Hawn has concocted an entire curriculum based on ‘mindfulness’ practices that is currently being integrated into the public classroom in an effort to foster “greater brain health”:

In 2003, I established the [Hawn Foundation](#) to help children create greater brain health through **mindfulness** practices. Working with neuroscientists, we’ve shown that meditation offers a way to change brain chemistry. Through our MindUP™ program in schools, we’ve demonstrated that if students take two minutes for a **brain break** three times a day, optimism in the classroom goes up almost 80 percent. On the playground, aggression goes down about 30 percent.

Among other major book retailers, Hawn’s MindUP™ curriculum is also available at Scholastic, “the worlds’ largest publisher and distributor of children’s books in the world, with \$1.6 billion in annual revenue.”

The Hawn Foundation website explains that MindUP™ curriculum visionary, Hawn, has assembled a veritable “team of educators, neuroscientists, positive psychologists and **experts in mindful awareness training**” (i.e., Eastern meditation) to create “a social and emotional literacy curriculum and training program” that currently “serves children across five continents”:

A child’s ability to learn is directly linked to their overall state of well-being and mental health, of primary concern to The Hawn Foundation and Founder, **Goldie Hawn who was the visionary behind MindUP™**. Assembling a team of educators, neuroscientists, positive psychologists and **experts in mindful awareness training**, the academy award winning actress, producer, author, child advocate and philanthropist created the evidence-based MindUP™ as a **social and emotional literacy curriculum and training program**. For 10 years, it has grown as the signature initiative of The Hawn Foundation and **currently serves children and schools across five continents**.

What Christian parents and educators, who utilize Hawn’s MindUP™ curriculum, might not know is that the Hollywood actress is also a practicing Buddhist who believes that “God is an encompassing experience that

should be felt,” a lie that Hawn passed on to her own daughter Kate:

The 4-year-old Kate [Hudson, now an adult] asked her mother “**Mommy, is God my cousin?**” Religious parents might respond yes or a slightly different answer like the idea of God being the Holy Father. While for atheists or the nonreligious, they may describe God is nonexistent, or an imaginary character in the Bible. But instead of defining God as a person, **Hawn wanted Kate to understand that God is an encompassing experience that should be felt**. “I said, “Well... I think God is everywhere, really... To feel God is what’s really important.” She continues saying that “It’s a feeling of joy and love and well-being” ... **Today, the Hollywood actress considers herself as a Jewish by principle but Buddhist in practice**.

Sadly, many professing Christians are behaving like Hindus and Buddhists too. They are tapping into the same occult root as the Maharishi, Lynch, Kabat-Zinn, Winfrey, Hawn, and many others.

#### **EASTERN MEDITATION POSING AS ‘CHRISTIAN’**

One particular website, the Christian Meditator, hawks the same Eastern meditation as the other meditators featured in this writing—and for the same stated goals to reduce stress and clear brain clutter—but under a disguise of Christian orthodoxy. The bold caption on the main web page states: “Many Believers are Discovering the Value of Christian Meditation to Relieve Stress, Renew their Minds, & Draw Closer to God.” But the ‘Christian Meditation’ they offer is NOT Christian, but Hindu and Buddhist.

After quoting the frequently misused poster verse for Contemplative Spirituality, Psalm 46:10, “*Be still and know that I am God,*” the web author explains the necessity of stillness meditation for Christians:

In today’s fast-paced, increasingly secular society, **it’s harder than ever to be Christ-like**—not just to attend church and read His Word, but to truly live surrendered to the Lord. We cannot truly grow spiritually or fulfill the great commission if **our minds are constantly filled with distractions and mindless chatter**. Because of this, it has become easier and easier for satan [sic] to weaken our lines of communication with God. Our souls always long for God, but **as the world grows louder, our faith and our need for our Savior are drowned out by all the noise**.

We are tired, we are busy, **we are distracted**, and so many of us desperately need help to relearn how to receive and abide His Light. But, as with so many things, **the answer lies within our innate connection to Him. And the key to that door is dwelling in God’s presence or Christian meditation**.

But as Pastor Larry DeBruyn so eloquently teaches in his article on the false “Presence” teaching sweeping through the Church today, believers cannot conjure up an intimate relationship with Christ by entering into a mystical stillness or silence (i.e., Eastern meditation):

We began this writing by citing evangelical Christians who are in the mood of trying to experience the divine presence. Seemingly, they want to “feel” their way into it. Yet, **the Bible teaches that the experience of God’s presence in our lives depends upon His initiating His work both for us and in us.** We can no more experience God’s presence that [sic] we can resurrect ourselves from the dead or seat ourselves with Him in heaven (Ephesians 2:1-10). This wonderful union can only be appropriated by objective faith, not by subjective feelings.

The Christian Meditator author also engages in the same deceptive maneuverings to disarm any Christians wary of the meditation practices offered on the website:

**Christian Meditation is different than traditional meditation in that believers are meditating on God, his presence, his glory, and his Word.**

**Are you wary of meditation? Many Christians today view meditation as a new-age or pagan phenomenon, closely related to witchcraft, secularism and anti-Christian, but these beliefs are false.** Meditation, like the written word, is a tool that can be used by any person for any purpose, and one of its most divine purposes is to strengthen and clarify your relationship with the Lord. The Bible even uses the word “meditate” many times, each time encouraging us to pray and reflect upon the glory of the Lord...When Christians run from the idea of meditation in fear that it will leave them vulnerable to satan [sic] or to other evil spirits, they forget what meditation really is in the simplest terms. To meditate is to devote the entirety of your being to one thought, feeling or idea. Any time you find yourself focusing wholly on one thought (whether you’re trying to solve a problem or simply ruminating on how angry you are with another person), you are, in fact, practicing a form of meditation!

But these statements betray the truth found in an advertisement directly underneath them on the same page. The “Guided ‘Christian’ Meditation” MP3s and CDs offered for purchase are identical to New Age guided meditation audios also available on Hindu, Buddhist, and New Age websites. The goal is an altered state of consciousness: a sensing or feeling of the ‘presence of God’ or ‘Higher Self’. The Lord Jesus Christ taught believers to pray with engaged rational thought, words with meaning, and with audible speech: *“When you pray, say...”* (Luke 11:1-4).

**EASTERN MEDITATION POSING AS ‘CHRISTIAN’** Christianbook.com is the online home of Christian Book Distributors (CBD)—“which is the largest catalog/Internet company serving the Christian marketplace.” A search on the website for “Christian meditation” turns up 37 pages of book titles, many of them authored by Roman Catholics or Christian contemplatives. [Ed. Note: A sampling of the books listed on the topic of ‘Christian’ meditation, extracted from the first 12 pages of this search are posted on the Herescope

blog post that first published this article. See: <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2015/11/mainstreaming-mystic-mindedness.html> ]

There is also a meditation book for children on this Christian website called, *Journey to the Heart: Centering Prayer for Children*, by Frank X. Jelenek. The back cover of this book give a brief bio of the author: “Frank X. Jelenek is a member of Thomas Keating’s Contemplative Outreach, dedicated to teaching the practice of centering prayer to people of all ages. He works for Scholastic Book Fairs and shares his passion for books and prayer with his twenty nieces and nephews.” The observant reader will remember that Scholastic also features Goldie Hawn’s MindUp (meditation) curriculum.

Thomas Keating is a Trappist Roman Catholic monk and major architect of the contemporary Contemplative Prayer movement. Centering Prayer is foundational to his movement, which comes from the Roman Catholic mystics and Desert Fathers who adopted their form of meditation from the Hindus and Buddhists.

#### ‘CHRISTIAN’ MYSTICISM

Bryan Flynn, Christian author and former New Ager, reviewed the *Be Still and Know That I am God* DVD produced by 20th Century Fox in 2006. Centering prayer was the feature of the DVD which featured such Christian contemplatives at Dallas Willard, Richard Foster, Calvin Miller, Beth Moore, Max Lucado, and Priscilla Shirer. The practice was also acknowledged by Dr. Charles Stanley. Here is Flynn’s assessment of Centering Prayer:

There is nothing more devious than a lie told with subtlety... The phrase **contemplative prayer** sounds like a suggestion that we are to contemplate God’s word or contemplate its meaning by thinking. However, that is not its real meaning or how it is practiced.

Those on the DVD who **promote the silence** teach that this state of mind is reached through a repetitive practice (i.e., a mantra). Listed in the acknowledgements of *Be Still* is Brannon Manning. He describes the method in his book *Signature of Jesus* this way,

[T]he first step in faith is to stop thinking about God at the time of prayer. The second step, “without moving your lips, repeat the sacred word [or phrase] inwardly, slowly, and often.” The third step concerns what to do when inevitable distractions come. The answer is to simply return to listening to your sacred word. Gently return your mind to your sacred word.

**This is the only way that one can truly silence the mind. It is like putting the mind in neutral.** Without repetition your own thoughts simply get in the way. We are beings that simply cannot shut off our thoughts, but you can through repetition, **by going into an altered state. Hindus have practiced this type of meditation for centuries.**

It should be no surprise that Rick Warren also promotes Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is one of many forms of Eastern meditation (i.e., mysticism) posing as Christian. Here are other types of meditation related to Centering Prayer being practiced in the Church at large today:

- Entering the Silence
- Lectio Divina
- The 'Jesus Prayer' (Breath Prayer)
- Prayer Walking (Labyrinth)
- Soaking Prayer
- Visualization (Imagination)
- Practicing the 'Presence'
- No-Mindedness (Martial Arts)

### MYSTIC-MINDED NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

These mystical practices have also become indispensable to the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). NAR mystic and author, John Crowder, published a book in 2006 titled, *Miracle Workers, Reformers, and The New Mystics: How to Become Part of the Supernatural Generation*. Note the bold caption on the book's back cover: "The ancient streams are merging. A new breed is arising—you can be part of it!"

The "ancient streams" that Crowder refers to are a litany of past and present Christian and/or Roman Catholic mystics who have passed down various forms of occult mysticism, (like Contemplative Spirituality,) including: Bernard of Clairvaux, Teresa of Avila, Christina the Astonishing, the Cevennes Prophets, Brother Lawrence, Madam Guyon, John of the Cross, Charles Finney, John G. Lake, A.A. Allen, Oral Roberts, and even Todd Bentley, et al. Crowder gives a chilling prediction on page 160 of *The New Mystics*:

But a **breed of new Christian mystics** is coming whose **devotion and supernatural experiences will put to shame the most powerful lamas, shamans, yogis and spiritists** of the Eastern world and the new age movement [sic]. [bold added]

It is frightening to contemplate what a powerful new breed of Christian mystics might accomplish in this generation.

### THE TRUTH:

Ray Yungen, in his well-documented expose' on these ancient mystical practices, *A Time of Departing*, makes this conclusion about Contemplative Spirituality:

After taking an honest look at the evidence, the conclusion is overwhelming that contemplative prayer is not a spiritually-sound practice for Christians. The errors of contemplative spirituality are simple and clear for the following three reasons:

- It is not biblical
- It correlates with occult methods (i.e., mantra, vain repetition).

- It is sympathetic to Eastern mystical perceptions (God in everything; all is One—Panentheism).

These are well-documented facts, not just arbitrary opinions. Furthermore, **the contemplative prayer movement is uniform, indicating a link to a central source of knowledge**. Based on the above facts, we know what that source is. The apostle warns us of seducing spirits in his first letter to Timothy:

*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to **deceiving [seducing] spirits and doctrines of demons**.* (1 Timothy 4:1)

After giving a brief synopsis of an excellent 3-part article series on mysticism by Pastor Gary Gilley, former mystic and discernment author Christine Pack offers a compelling case against anyone flirting with altered states of consciousness, (like the mystical experiences examined in this article), because they endanger practitioners with an altered worldview which is diametrically opposed to the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ:

... I came out of that FIRST meditation session I ever had with an altered worldview.... In the space of 20 minutes (because that's all the time it takes to do a meditation), my worldview shifted dramatically... the Christianity of the Bible was no longer a valid spiritual path for me. Why? Because Christianity is the **only** religion with such unbending and exclusive truth claims. ("I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life...no-one comes to the Father but through Me." - John 14:6... And **meditation** counters this claim by generating an experience in which **a person feels a profound sense of interconnectedness and oneness with "all" that feels completely counter to the exclusive truth claims of Christianity**. It feels like you have just had an encounter with God, that you have been in the presence of the Divine...only, you haven't. Now. Let's look at the logical conclusions that practicing mystics MUST come to if they are staying true to their belief system: **If I can experience God through meditation, if I can "cross the divide" through my own efforts, then the Cross of Calvary has no meaning**. And Jesus was a liar when He said that He was the only way to God. And the Bible was wrong where it says that without Christ we are dead in our sins and trespasses (no "divine inner spark" already living within each person).

*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee,"*  
(Isaiah 26:3)

**NOTE: This article was previously published on November 23, 2015 on the Herescope blog. The Herescope version includes graphic illustrations and footnotes. Most bold emphasis has been added—see blog version for details. Gaylene Goodroad spoke on this topic at the recent Discernment Conference in Niles, Michigan. Video and audio recordings will be available in January. <http://herescope.blogspot.com/2015/11/mainstreaming-mystic-mindedness.html>**