

Contemplative Prayer

Now let's turn our heads from how we are to pray to what is going on in American Churchianity today.

- 1 I'm not talking so much about the Health & wealth, blab it & grab it crowd, they're always gonna try to boss God around into giving them what they want.
- 2 I'm talking about the Eastern, New Age, Post-Modern, contemplative spirituality that is coming to Church.

There is a false, New Age, Eastern, aspect of prayer that is going on & I want us to know about & be aware of:

- 1 We have talked before how the spirit of error goes & takes something from the spirit of the age and then gives it a Christian makeover, a Sunday go to meetin', if you will, & presents it to the church as Christian & Biblical.
- 2 This has been going on for years with Post Modernism & the Eastern New-Age spirituality mysticism nonsense;
- 3 They even have good honest Bible believing Christians thinking that yoga is just stretching...
- 4 Now after that attention grabber, I want to show you another area the spirit of error is weaving his web.
- 5 In the area of prayer, & why not? Why wouldn't the enemy attack prayer?
- 6 He has already attacked the Bible you have in your hand, the way God speaks to us, as a set of fairy tales...
- 7 It would also make sense that he would wanna mess up the communication process on both ends... (meditation)

First we have to define a term. Here is a good definition of Contemplative Spirituality:

- 1 It is a belief system that uses ancient mystical practices to induce altered states of consciousness (this is called "the silence") & is often wrapped in Christian terminology.
- 2 The premise of contemplative spirituality is pantheistic (God is all) and panentheistic (God is in all).

Contemplative Prayer – a mystical prayer practice that leads one into "the silence" & in actuality leads away from God.

- 1 The purpose of **CP** is to enter an altered state of consciousness in order to find one's true self, thus finding God.
- 2 This true self relates to the belief that man is basically good.
- 3 Advocates of **CP** teach that all humans have a divine center & that everyone, not just Christians, should practice **CP**.

Did Jesus instruct his followers to empty their minds through CP?

Of course not, He said,

- 1 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul & with all your MIND." Mt 22:37
- 2 Hannah when seeking the Lord for a child was accused by Eli of being drunk said...

1 Sam 1:10-17.

- 10 And she was in bitterness of soul, & prayed unto the LORD, & wept sore.
 - 11 And she vowed a vow, & said, O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your handmaid, & remember me, & not forget your handmaid, but will give unto your handmaid a male child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, & there shall no razor come upon his head.
 - 12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.
 - 13 Now Hannah, she spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: t/f Eli thought she had been drunken.
 - 14 And Eli said unto her, How long will you be drunken? put away your wine from you.
 - 15 And Hannah answered & said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. (soul = will, emotions & MIND) (she let God know all 3)
 - A. She wasn't sitting there emptying her mind trying to enter an altered state of consciousness, trying to find her true self.
 - B. She was communicating her heart to God; she poured her soul out to Him.
 - 16 Count not your handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint & grief have I spoken until now.
 - 17 Then Eli answered & said, Go in peace: & the God of Israel grant you your petition that you have asked of him.
- 1 If we we're sittin' there blankin' our minds out, how do we get around ye have not b/c ye ask not?

Let's look a little more, so you don't think I'm being flip.

According to www.contemplativeoutreach.org

"Centering Prayer is drawn from ancient prayer practices of the Pseudo-Christian contemplative heritage,

- 1 Notably the Desert Fathers (a bunch of ascetic monks living in the desert in Egypt in the 3rd Cent).
- 2 The Cloud of Unknowing (some 14th Cent mystic book)
- 3 St. John of the Cross (He was a RC mystic writer & poet from Spain who lived in 16th Cent.)
 - A. He was a counter-reformationist (explain); He is one of 33 Doctors of the RCI.)
- 4 & Teresa of Avila. (Another one of the mystic, RC Drs from Spain who lived in the 16th Cent; who was observed levitating during mass more than once. Fwd'd e-mail)

It was distilled into a simple method of prayer in the 1970's by 3 Trappist monks,

- 1 Fr. William Meninger, Fr. Basil Pennington & Abbot Thomas Keating at the Trappist Abbey, St. Joseph's Abbey in the city of Spencer, in the People's Republic of Tax-achusetts."
- 2 During the 20 yrs (1961-1981) when Keating was abbot, St. Joe's held dialogues w/Buddhist & Hindu representatives
- 3 a Zen master taught there & another Trappist monk who had become a TM teacher taught that nonsense.

The influence of Buddhism & Hinduism on CP is clear.

- 1 Words such as "detachment," "transformation," "emptiness," "enlightenment" & "awakening" swim in & out of the waters of these books.
- 2 Despite the fact that **CP** is presented as Christian practice these terms are a red flag; to take a closer look of what is being taught.

Themes you'll find echoed in the **CP movement include the notions that true prayer is:**

- 1 Silent, beyond words, beyond thought,
- 2 Does away with the "false self," triggers transformation of consciousness, and is an awakening.
- 3 Suggested techniques often include breathing exercises, visualization, repetition of a word or phrase, & detachment from thinking.

Basil Pennington, one of the best known proponents of the centering prayer technique, has defined the guidelines for centering prayer:

1. Sit comfortably with your eyes closed, relax, & quiet yourself. Be in love & faith to God.
2. Choose a sacred word that best supports your sincere intention to be in the Lord's presence and open to His divine action within you (i.e. "Jesus", "Lord," "God," "Savior," "Abba," "Divine," "Shalom," "Spirit," "Love," etc.).
3. Let that word be gently present as your symbol of your sincere intention to be in the Lord's presence and open to His divine action within you.
4. Whenever you become aware of anything (thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, associations, etc.), simply return to your sacred word, your anchor.

Ideally, the prayer will reach the point where the person is not engaged in their thoughts as they arrive on their stream of consciousness.

- 1 This is the "unknowing" referenced in the 14th century book "The Unknowing Cloud".
- 2 This stuff is coming to a church near you... it already is at a church near you.
- 3 Churches are practicing yoga... oh it is just stretching... I've been blessed by it, it helps me...
- 4 I've tried this prayer, God has blessed me thru it... what god?
- 5 This is Eastern; an East wind is blowing thru American Churchianity & all roads are leading back to Rome.
- 6 Any ex-RCs here? Do you want to have these Roman Drs guiding your prayers or the HS & the Word of God?
- 7 You that aren't RC, go find an ex one & find out why they left & don't want to bring their practices in?
- 8 Understand that the RC system is NOT a Biblical system.

It's not that we need to know the depths of Satan, but we need to be aware,

- 1 B/c the enemy will try to press his ways into your lives, into your families & into our fellowship.
- 2 This is part of my job, you men it is part of your job as priest in your home to keep it out of there...
- 3 If we learn together what this stuff is & are aware of it, we can be watchful & by the power of the HS & the grace of God we won't be sucked into this stuff... b/c the deception is gonna get stronger...

Christian Biblical Prayer is to be directed/addressed to the Father, dictated by His will, in the Spirit, led, in the Name of Jesus, literally sent by our LJC...

- 1 This Christian Biblical Prayer is communication, with our mind, sometimes verbally, yes, but always w/our mind engaged to our Father.
 - 2 The parameters is His Will, our prayers are to be w/in the boundaries, dictated by His will, not anyone else's.
 - 3 We are to pray in the Spirit, they are to be spiritual prayers, led, guided & directed by the HS,
 - A. Just like He guides your walk, Just like the Spirit leads your life, He is to lead your prayer-life.
 - B. The HS is never gonna have you blank out your mind, He is gonna have you fill it w/God's Word.
 - 4 & we don't come to God in our own stead, we come in the Name of Jesus...
 - 5 Understand Jesus isn't going to approve of me going to ask God things that are outside His will or not Spirit led.
 - 6 So, I'm not to misuse His sending me...
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- 1 These Christian Biblical prayers are to be given, offered, asked in faith, with a full assurance, a complete confidence.
 - A. I can be this confident, b/c of the blood of Jesus has allowed me in & I'm asking God to do what He already wills & the HS who knows God's will for my life is leading me & Jesus has sent me to ask.
 - 2 They are to be offered with a true heart; with a truthful heart, & with a whole heart.
 - A. A heart that is wholly consecrated to God.
 - 3 They are to be offered with truth, truthfully, without any guile or deceit involved, I need to be straight & honest w/Him.
 - 4 I need to offer these prayers with a predetermined attitude that I will accept His will; His answer.
 - 5 They must be accompanied with a confession of my sin & a repentant attitude & a forgiving heart...

Now, IF you want to know HOW you can guarantee that your prayers won't be answered, don't follow those guidelines or do any of those on the handout...