

The Need for More Adventist Resources

BY MONTE SAHLIN

There is a real need for more discipleship resources created by Seventh-day Adventist writers and publishers. One of the reasons we list materials from other sources in this feature is that there are not enough new Adventist materials. Another reason is that there are some topics for which excellent, Bible-based materials have been prepared by other Christians—and it would be a waste of resources to duplicate everything. All of the items listed below are from Christian authors and publishers who are not affiliated with the Adventist Church, but they are nonetheless good tools of which we can make excellent use.

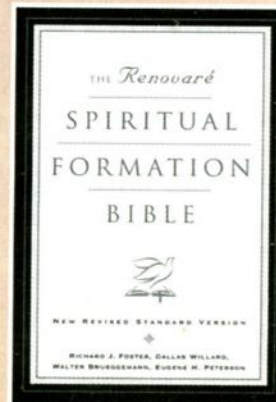
I should also tell you about a major project of the North American Division (NAD) to fill the need for more discipleship resources. You cannot get any of these materials yet, because they are being prepared, but keep your eyes open!

The Center for Creative Ministry is working under a contract with NAD Church Resources to prepare a curriculum library that will include teaching, handout, and visual materials for at least 150 topics selected with wide input from pastors and departmental leaders. (A total of nearly 300 topics were identified in the early research, and future funding may expand this tool.)

The Discipleship Curriculum Resource Project will be published in electronic form, because of its large size and the attempt to make it easier and more cost-effective to use. The materials will be in a form that allows pastors and lay leaders to personalize for their congregation, small group, or local ministry. Included will be sufficient material to teach for 30 minutes up to four hours on a topic. This will involve teaching notes and background material, bibliography for additional information, handouts for participants, discussion questions, group exercises for skill development, and PowerPoint visuals. A wide coalition of Seventh-day Adventists who have been involved in writing and using discipleship materials in their ministry will be among the many writers and researchers. (If you have an interest or materials that you would like to propose for inclusion, contact project director Paul Richardson at the Center for Creative Ministry, Box 23200, Lincoln, Nebraska 68542 or by e-mail at pr@creativeministry.org.)

The Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible

I still treasure a Bible I was given as a child that includes the "H.M.S. Richards Helps." In recent years the publishers of Bibles have made a real industry of many different products with various kinds of specialized helps bound in the back of the Bible or printed in the margins. These often include color-coded systems to make it easy to work through Bible studies on various topics or find topical clusters of texts throughout Scripture.



A Bible is now available that has helps directly related to discipleship. The text is the New Revised Standard Version, and the helps were compiled by four of the most well-known Christian writers on discipleship: Richard Foster, Eugene Peterson, Dallas Willard, and Walter Brueggemann. The purpose of the helps is to help one "to form a Christlike character."

This is a useful reference for pastors, elders, and others leading in discipleship classes or small groups, or working one-on-one with new believers. It includes discussion questions, learning exercises, illustrations, and relevant background material for most chapters in the Bible, as well as a concise introduction to each book in the Bible, pointing out how it is particularly useful in making disciples.

Many Adventist Book Centers carry this item. It is also available at almost all Christian bookstores and the major secular bookstore chains (including their online divisions).

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Friends United Meeting

Quaker Life
June 2005

Quaker Life Navigation:
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The With God Life

An Interview with Richard Foster

By Trish Edwards-Konic

During the month of May, *The Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible* appeared in bookstores and began to be seen in the hands of people in churches and on the street. For Friends, it was a great month; for the first time a study Bible was released that reflected Quaker theology.

“There is a great deal of Quaker thinking in this Bible,” stated Richard Foster, Editor. “One of the great gifts Quakerism has is that its greatest treasures are focal and very foundational Quaker insights are found in the pages of this Bible.” Work began five years ago when Steve Hanselman, then Vice President and Publisher for Harper San Francisco approached Richard Foster and Renovare with the idea of working with them to publish a study Bible that looked at Scripture through the lens of spiritual formation. General Editors were selected: Gayle Beebe (Quaker), Foster (Quaker), Lynda Graybeal (Renovare staff & nondenominational), Tom Oden (United Methodist) and Dallas Willard (Southern Baptist with many travels among Friends).

“Dallas Willard understands Quaker thinking about as well as anybody,” Foster acknowledged. “I had him do a study once on George Fox and his insights just blew me away.”

The other Quaker who worked on this Bible is Howard Macy, Professor at George Fox University. Marva Dawn, although not a Friend, also teaches at George Fox. Other names well-known among Friends are Eugene Peterson, Walter Brueggemann, David DeSilva, Emilie Griffin and James Earl Massey, plus 44 other contributors.

“The concept that Christ has come to teach His people Himself is central to this Bible,” according to Foster.

In the General Introduction, the General Editors write: ...God is with us. Christ is our ever-living Teacher. The Spirit will guide and direct...Our only task is to listen. And obey.”

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The overall theme of this new study Bible is “the with-God life” grounded in “The Immanuel Principle.”

“The Immanuel Principle and the with-God life are the same exactly,” explained Foster. “We say the Bible is all about life with God and we are stressing the unity of the Biblical principle — that God is working with people and we work with God.”

“God is with us throughout history in many different ways. And we have divided the Bible into ‘stages of formation’ that tell us how God worked with differing people during various periods of history.”

“It’s a way of saying that Christ is alive and has come to teach us or Jesus’ words: ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ But the questions are: but how does that work in travail, in exile, in restoration, in mission, in community and finally in eternity?”

There is a two-page overview of the whole Bible divided into these stages of formation; it includes Scriptures, God’s Action, Human Reaction, Type and Locus of Mediation, Social Context, Key Individuals and Key Spiritual Disciplines. The Stages of Formation convey how the People of God relate to God throughout the Biblical record.

“The Immanuel Principle is ultimately cosmic,” according to Foster. “We are to reign with God and be with God forever and forever. In the past God worked first directly, then indirectly with his people. Since Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection, God works both directly and indirectly. Quakers in the gathered silence experience God both directly and indirectly.”

I noticed that the focus on the with-God life circumnavigates inconsistencies found in Scripture and differing opinions about theology. By looking at how God revealed himself to people throughout Biblical history negates all those arguments. “You bypass it all,” stated Foster. “You put your focus on how God has been with a person and what does that say to me, now? What are their strengths and weaknesses and how does that apply to me? It’s all about developing charact — character that goes on into the future where we will reign with God and be with God eternally.

“The goal is to develop character so that we can make choices that please God and are in God’s way. You may feel abandoned by God’s consciousness although God is present; it is often during those times that we grow the most in character. Even George Fox in his early experiences developed this way.

“The idea is that God is with us, not constant in the sense that our consciousness is not interrupted, but like a parent with a child. The parent is always conscious that the child doesn’t have the total ability to grow up, and the parent leaves the child from time to time so they can learn.”

The 15-section essays are heavy on inner transformation and conformity to

God's character which fits into Friends tradition. They lay out the progression of how God's people have related to their God and the changing nature of the with-God life. "Their function," stated Foster, "is to form us into God's character by building a transforming relationship through the God-life."

An introduction for each book of the Bible explains not only the historical and theological content but also highlights the main themes for spiritual formation. Spiritual exercises are included to help incorporate and deepen what the reader encounters while reading the text. Profiles of Biblical characters tie in some person in church history and then make a contemporary application. John Woolman is the key person in one of these Profiles. A Spiritual Disciplines Index provides a glossary and Biblical references for spiritual disciplines and the key themes of spiritual formation. Dallas Willard combed the Bible to create this index. During the next few years, HarperSanFrancisco plans to publish Spiritual Formation guides that expand and further explore the themes found in the Spiritual Formation Bible. The first one will concentrate on The People of God in Individual Communion (Genesis 1-11) and The People of God with Immanuel (the Gospels).

"The need for a renewal of the role of Scripture is exceedingly urgent," says Foster. "So many people today see Scripture primarily as an object for historical criticism, on one hand, or 'God's Little Instruction Book,' on the other. The practical effect of this trivialization of Scripture is that people today are seeking wisdom from the latest self-help fad rather than from the Bible and Jesus. Clearly, we need a richer, fuller understanding of Scripture for daily life."

For four days, June 19-22, a conference will be held in Denver, Colorado — "The With-God Life: The Dynamics of Scripture for Christian Spiritual Transformation." It will begin to answer the question, "How does the Bible serve as the primary written resource for transforming our hearts and minds into the very nature of the heart and mind of God." Information is available through Renovare, 8 Inverness Drive E., Suite 102, Englewood, CO 80112-5609; phone (888)736-6273; email 2005ic@renovare.org; website www.renovare.org/2005ic.

A Recorded Friends Minister, Richard Foster is also the founder of Renovare, teaches at Spring Arbor University and travels worldwide teaching on Christian spirituality.

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The Bible Is God's Word!

Dave Hunt

God never adjusts Himself or His Word to the tastes of men. He never changes anything to appeal to the corrupt appetites of the ungodly in any age—all must come to Him on His terms. He commands all men everywhere to repent because of coming judgment (Acts 17:30, 31). “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord...” (Is 55:7). There is no softening of the gospel to make it “seeker friendly.”

Many claim to seek God but never find Him. Yet He has promised: “Ye shall seek ME, and find ME, when ye shall search for ME with all your heart” (Jer 29:13). The true God must be sought on His terms. It is not a question of music, videos, or other gimmicks to attract the youth, or of icons, candles, rituals, or other embellishments to create an aura of “sacredness.” The truth asks no props, only our fervent desire. The earnest seeker must come to God in repentance and cry out to Him for mercy.

God has spoken in His infallible Word. We must honor what He has said. Truth is not negotiable. Yet many Christian leaders promote wicked Bible versions such as Eugene Peterson's *The Message* (NavPress, 1993: see *TBC* Oct '95) that pervert God's Word. Men like Peterson have no conscience about changing what God says, replacing His words with their own.

Peterson is praised for this perversion by many Christian leaders such as J.I. Packer, Warren Wiersbe, Jack W. Hayford, and Richard Foster, founder of the *Renovaré* Movement and General Editor of the *Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2005). Foster loves *The Message* because it supports that movement. Peterson is “Consulting Editor, New Testament” of the *Renovaré Bible*. He reduces much of Paul's vital treatment of the gospel in Romans to metaphor, which he says is the “opposite [of] precise use of language” (p. 2045).

The *Renovaré* movement's major purpose is to subtly lead the church back into the occultism of the mystics of the early Roman Catholic Church through “spiritual disciplines” and “spiritual formation.” The *Renovaré Bible* is a major effort in that direction. A host of “scholars” contributed commentaries, among them Bruce Demarest, Professor of Theology at Denver Seminary; Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; Tremper Longman III, Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College; Earl F. Palmer, pastor of University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, WA and on the Board of Trustees of the long-apostate Princeton Theological Seminary (as was Sir John Marks Templeton).

The *Renovaré Bible* includes the Apocrypha and declares, “Most of the Church throughout much of history has accepted the Deuterocanonicals as Scripture....”¹ Not as *Scripture*. Nor were these 13 books, written during the time between Malachi and the birth of Christ, ever accepted by Israel as inspired. Indeed, 1 Maccabees states that God was not speaking through prophets and apologizes for its errors (9:27 and 14:41). Obviously, anything written during that silence from God could not be Scripture.

From the Apocrypha, the Roman Catholic Church justifies purgatory, prayers for the dead and their eventual redemption through a propitiatory sacrifice (thereby justifying the Mass), purchase of forgiveness of sins, worship of angels, prayers to the “saints” and their ability to intervene. Yet *Renovaré* asserts, “The Deuterocanonicals do not affect any central doctrine of the Christian faith.”²

The Apocrypha were never quoted by Christ or by His apostles, though the Old Testament is quoted in the New more than 250 times. Even *Renovaré* does not put the Apocrypha on the same level as the Bible but as helpful for “spiritual formation.” Then why include it in the same volume as Scripture—and without any warning concerning its heretical teachings?!

The *Renovaré Bible* introduces what it calls “Spiritual Disciplines” to help one’s “spiritual formation.” Neither term is found in the Bible. *Renovaré* declares that the purpose of this study Bible is the “discovery, instruction, and practice of the Spiritual Disciplines.” In fact, many of these are occult “disciplines” not found in Scripture but advocated by the mystics as a means of getting in touch with God. Foster has been a major influence in seducing today’s church with the same practices—and now has edited a Bible for the express purpose of justifying this seduction.

A number of commendable “Spiritual Disciplines” are mentioned, and some that are not commendable: “solitude, confession...meditation and silence...secrecy, sacrifice, celebration.” These innocent words have a special meaning for Foster. Explaining his view of “celebration,” he writes: “We of the New Age can risk going against the tide. Let us with abandon...see visions and dream dreams....The imagination can release a flood of creative ideas [and] be lots of fun” (*Celebration of Discipline*, Harper & Row, 1978, p. 170).

In the West, meditation means to think deeply about something, but in the East it means to empty the mind in order to open it to the spirit world, leading to mystical experiences of “God.” Purporting to reject Eastern mysticism, Foster says, “Christian meditation is an attempt to empty the mind in order to fill it.” He seductively suggests: “John was ‘in the Spirit on the Lord’s day’ when he received his apocalyptic vision (Rv 1:10). Could it be that John was trained in a way of listening and seeing that we have forgotten?...Let us have courage to...once again learn the ancient...art of meditation” (*Celebration*, pp. 14,15). The idea that John had a special technique for hearing from God is heresy of the worst sort, but foundational to *Renovaré’s*

promotion of “spiritual disciplines” and “spiritual formation”!

The arousal of the imagination through fantasy and visualization is a major theme in Foster’s *Celebration*. He acknowledges that “prayer through the imagination” was taught to him by Agnes Sanford, who popularized “inner healing,” a major source of much of the occultism in the Charismatic movement. (For documentation of her full-blown occultism, see *TBC* July ’89.) We have dealt with these errors in detail in *The Seduction of Christianity, Beyond Seduction, and Occult Invasion*.

Foster writes in *Celebration*, “In your imagination allow your spiritual body, shining with light, to rise out of your physical body....Reassure your body that you will return....Go deeper and deeper into outer space until there is nothing except the warm presence of the eternal Creator. Rest in his presence. Listen quietly [to] any instruction given” (p. 27). This is astral projection and occult contact through the imagination and is the major technique used by shamans to contact their spirit guides.

Yet Foster claims that it leads to Christ and God: “Take a single event [from Scripture]. Seek to live the experience, remembering the encouragement of Ignatius of Loyola (Jesuit founder) to apply all our senses to our task...represent to your imagination the whole of the mystery...as an active participant....You can actually encounter the living Christ in the event, be addressed by His voice...touched by His healing power....Jesus Christ will actually come to you” (p. 26). *Not so!* You cannot call Jesus Christ from the right hand of the Father to appear to you—but any demon will be happy to pretend to be Jesus .

In like manner, the *Renovaré Bible* honors Catholic heretics and occultists as “saints” and their writings as a framework within which to understand Scripture. *The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola* are endorsed even though they involve occult techniques that have caused many to be demonized (see *TBC* Mar ’00).

Sadly, the *Renovaré* explanatory notes deny the Divine authorship of much of Scripture—even that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Yet they hypocritically declare, “We read the Bible literally, from cover to cover...[and] in context.”³ *Renovaré* claims that Genesis 1-11 is neither historic nor scientific,⁴ and that the entire book of Genesis is merely a collection of myths:

Genesis began as an oral tradition of narrative stories passed down from generation to generation....These stories [gradually] took on theological meaning....Over time [they] were written down and collected together (Gen 12-50), and a prologue (Gen 1-11) was added....Borrowing from other creation accounts...stories with parallels to ancient Near Eastern religious narrative and mythology were reshaped with monotheistic intent....These strands of varied materials were gathered and edited into the written text....⁵

What wickedness for Christian “scholars” to unite with skeptics to declare that Genesis, which is foundational to the Bible, is just an edited compilation of mythology and folk tales! If Genesis is not literally inspired of God, then how can we have confidence in any other part of the Bible? What about Paul’s statement that “All scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tm 3:16), or Peter’s “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pt 1:21), or Christ’s many quotations from Genesis and references to “the things that Moses commanded” (Mt 8:4; 19:7; Mk 1:44; 7:10; 10:3, 4; 12:19, 26; Lk 16:29-31, etc.)?

Contrary to *Renovaré*, the Bible itself declares in numerous places that *under the inspiration of God* Moses wrote the Pentateuch: “And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book...and Moses wrote all the words of the LORD...and Moses wrote this law, and delivered it...unto all the elders of Israel....And...Moses...commanded the Levites...put it in...the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God...” (Ex 17:14; 24:4; Dt 31:9, 25, 26, etc.).

“The law of Moses” is referred to repeatedly (Jos 8:31-32; 23:6; 1 Ki 2:3; 2 Ki 14:6; 23:25; 2 Chr 30:16; Ezr 3:2; Ne 8:1; etc.). Jesus called the Pentateuch “the law of Moses” (Lk 24:44). The Gospel of John is filled with affirmations that Moses was a prophet who wrote much Scripture (Jn 1:17, 45; 5:45, 46; 7:19-23, etc.).

Of Daniel, the *Renovaré Bible* declares, “We do not know who wrote it or exactly when it was written...it was most likely partially written during Antiochus Epiphanes’ persecution of the Jews in Babylon, which began with the desecration of the Temple in 167 B.C.” 6 So it is the work of an imposter pretending to be Daniel 400 years after the fact! To escape admitting that Daniel prophesied centuries in advance the breakup of Alexander’s empire under four generals, the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the pollution of the temple, skeptics had to invent a later date for these prophecies. *Renovaré* echoes this lie, robbing Christians of an essential proof of the validity of the Bible and depriving the unsaved of life-giving truth!

Daniel is written in the first person, telling events that happened to the writer four centuries before 167 B.C.: “When I...Daniel, had seen the vision (8:15)...I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days (8:27)....In the first year of Darius...I Daniel understood (9:1,2)...I Daniel was mourning three full weeks (10:2),” etc. (For evidence that Daniel authored his book in the sixth century B.C., see Q&A Sept and Oct ’01.)

The *Renovaré* “scholars” continually downplay the powerful Old Testament prophecies of Christ (pp. 22, 32, 1375, 1377-8, 1384, etc.). The key prophecy in Isaiah 9:6-7 of the coming Messiah, who is “the mighty God, the everlasting Father,” is said to speak of “human agents” (p. .997).

The notes reduce Isaiah’s prophecies to “tradition” (pp. 982, 983), would have us believe that much of that book was not

written by Isaiah (there are “three authors”— pp. 982, 1068), and even deny that chapter 53 prophesies Christ’s sacrifice for our sins (p. 984)! *Renovaré* describes the book of Isaiah as “poetic imagination...Isaiah imagines,” etc. The *Renovaré* “scholars” declare, “The prophets of Israel are not to be thought of primarily as...predictors of the future...they were poets” (p. 1079). Through poetry, Jeremiah attempts “to make sense of the events of his day...” (p. 1080). Blasphemy!

Renovaré rejects the powerful prophecies of Daniel, including the proof of 9:24-26 that Jesus is the Christ. There is not a word about the image foretelling the four world kingdoms and revival of the fourth (Roman Empire) under ten heads (2:36-45) to be destroyed by the Messiah when He sets up His everlasting kingdom. Nor is there a word about the future apocalyptic significance of the four beasts of Daniel 7 coinciding with Revelation 13. The wrath of God poured out upon earth during the Great Tribulation (*Renovaré* avoids that term) are described as “natural disasters straight out of Exodus” (p. 2268). Yet even the magicians in Egypt told Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God” (Ex 8:19).

All of the major prophecies so crucial in proving the Bible to be the Word of God and Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah are either not commented upon, or are spiritualized away as pertaining to the “faith community” and its “spiritual formation.” There is no recognition of the great prophecies in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc., of Israel being brought back into her own land in the last days, and that she must endure forever (Ezk 35-37, etc.). For example, the powerful prophetic promise from God to bring back the Jews scattered around the world (Jer 31:8-14) is interpreted as a promise to all homeless people (nothing about Israel), and God’s promise that Israel can never be destroyed (31:35-37) is ignored!

Israel is treated as having been replaced by the church. Incredibly, the valley of dry bones brought back to life in Ezekiel 37, which is clearly declared to be “the whole house of Israel” (37:11), is interpreted as the birth of the church at Pentecost! Ezekiel 38-39 is not about Armageddon, with real armies attacking the nation of Israel back in her land in the last days to be rescued by the Messiah, but is about “dark forces” always at work in the world.

There is no commentary at Revelation 1:7 about the Second Coming of Christ (p. 2269), no evidence of belief in the Rapture; only that Christ will one day “return and overcome the wicked powers” (p. 2266).

Revelation is reduced to a “pastoral letter meant to sustain the suffering and hearten the weary faithful” (p. 2267). The Antichrist and False Prophet (Rv 13) are depersonalized as “dark forces of evil” (p. 2281). The woman on the beast (Rv 17) has no prophetic significance but “embodies those institutions that across the ages have sold themselves to the dark forces...” (p. 2284). There is nothing about the city that it is clearly said she represents. So the fall of Babylon (Rv 18) “pictures the ultimate collapse of all human institutions given over to the lust for power...” (p. 2285).

The marriage of the Lamb to His bride (Rv 19) is not a real event in heaven but “symbolic of the many different celebrations that bring joy and jubilation” into our lives (p. 2287) The thousand-year reign of Christ (Rv 20) is not a real event, and the armies of the world coming against Christ and the saints at Jerusalem after Satan’s release merely symbolize “the armies of darkness [which] surround us” (p. 2288).

This “Study Bible” is one more step on the slippery downward path into deepening apostasy. The Bible is being mocked in the church. Let us stand firmly, vocally, and actively in defense of God’s holy, infallible, inerrant, and sufficient Word! **TBC**

Endnotes

1. **Richard J. Foster, ed., *The Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), xxx.**
2. **Ibid., Foreword, xvii.**
3. **Ibid., General Introduction, xxxi.**
4. **Ibid., 14-15.**
5. **Ibid., 13-15.**
6. **Ibid., From the introduction to Daniel, 1245, by James M. Rand.**

Why Does the *Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible* Include the Deuterocanonical Books?

The word "Deuterocanonical" simply means "a second canon" and refers to those books written between the time of the Old and New Testaments. The *Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible* includes the Deuterocanonical books. There are numerous reasons for this decision—let me give you five:

1. The Deuterocanonical books were part of the ancient Greek Bible, the Septuagint, which was in circulation during the time of Christ. It was the Bible of the early Church. This Bible shaped the conscious awareness of God for the first Christians.
2. The Deuterocanonical books help Christian readers understand the New Testament context—the context of Jesus' ministry as well as of the writers of the New Testament books. The people Jesus encountered and taught were in many ways spiritually formed by these writings.
3. Most of the Church throughout most of her history has included the Deuterocanonical books as part of the Bible. The Eastern Orthodox Bible, the Greek Bible, the Slavonic Bible, the Anglican Bible and the Roman Catholic Bible all currently include the Deuterocanonical books. Plus, while not viewing them as Scripture, early Protestant Bibles—Luther's translation, the Great Bible of 1539, the Geneva Bible of 1560 (supported by John Calvin and John Knox), the Bishops' Bible of 1568, and the King James Bible of 1611—included the Deuterocanonical books, or "Apocrypha," as something of an appendix.
4. Throughout the ages, many questions have persisted about the value of the Deuterocanonical books. Even those groups in our time who include and use the Deuterocanonals do not give them the same authority as the primary canon. And we, the General Editors of the *Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible*, would not want to accord these books the same authority as revealed Scripture. Still, their role in bridging the gap between Malachi and Matthew is unquestioned and they provide marvelous insight into the way in which the first Christians understood their relationship to God.
5. The Deuterocanonical books do not affect any central doctrine of the Christian faith, but they do contain many helpful insights for spiritual formation. For this reason alone they are worth reading and can function for us today in much the same way that good sermons and devotional writings do. Of them, Luther wrote, "Apocrypha—that is, books which are not regarded as equal to the holy Scriptures, and yet are profitable and good to read." For this purpose, we have organized the Deuterocanonical books into three categories: Law & History, Writings & Wisdom, and Prophets & Apocalyptic.

For the General Editors,

Richard J. Foster

"Critical Praise" for Renovaré Bible not too critical

Considering that The Renovaré Spiritual Formation Study Bible mirrors "higher criticism" (a movement in which intellectuals question the authorship and authenticity of Scripture portions—particularly prophetic passages—akin to the ungodly "Jesus Seminar") and incorporates New Age terminology and methodology (under the guise of "spiritual formation") and then packages it with a problematic translation, one wonders just how closely other Christian endorsers have examined its contents—or the teachings of Renovaré. Below is the two-thirds-page ad, prominently featured next to the publisher's box on page 6 of the July 2005 issue of Christianity Today. It is interesting to note that although the Renovaré logo appears at the bottom of the ad, the publisher (nowhere mentioned) is actually Harper Collins (which incidentally also publishes The Satanic Bible by Anton La Vey). Harper Collins owns Zondervan, the largest "Christian" publishing company, which recently formed a partnership with Youth Specialties to create materials for the Emerging Church movement—which is in turn a primary importer/exporter of Catholic mystic tradition, being marketed to evangelicals as "vintage" faith or "authentic" Christianity.

Endorsements of Renovaré Bible include Popular Christian Authors

The Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible . . . is unrivaled as a classic work of biblical theology suffused with a pastoral heart."

—BRENNAN MANNING, author of *The Ragamuffin Gospel* [endorsed by Eugene Peterson and Max Lucado; Manning is a former Franciscan priest]

"This Bible helps us desire intimacy with God, not just know the typical facts and knowledge."

—DAN KIMBALL, author of *The Emerging Church* [with contributions by Rick Warren and Brian McLaren], and Pastor of Vintage Faith Church

"This Bible is greatly needed."

—TONY CAMPOLO, author of *Speaking My Mind...* [embracing homosexual marriage, espousing a similar "soft" view of Romans as Eugene Peterson's *The Message*]

"...[T]he most spiritually-impactful Bible of our time."

—JOHN ORTBERG, Teaching Pastor, Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, author of *If You Want to Walk on Water...* [endorsed by Dallas Willard; a former teaching pastor at Willow Creek, Ortberg holds a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Fuller]

"With great enthusiasm, I open *The Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible*. One could not assemble a finer team to compile it."

—MAX LUCADO, [prolific author; pastor, Oak Hills Church, signer of Evangelicals & Catholics Together II]

"[An] outstanding resource . . . Christians of many different traditions will appreciate this ecumenical resource devoted to spiritual renewal."

—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY [this secular trade journal is politically—and religiously—"correct"]



Ad appearing in the July 2005 issue of Christianity Today (shown about 1/2 actual size)

< AD LISTS SPECIAL FEATURES: "The Bible as it was intended to be" [God needs our help?] • "A new approach to Scripture" [from Catholic mystic tradition?] • Essays on the "with-God life" [how is this different from Universalism?] • "Notes for every book and passage from a spiritual formation approach" [what kind of 'formation' remains after dismissing Genesis 1-11 as a collection of myth and folklore handed down by oral tradition? What 'formation' occurs when key prophetic passages are selectively expurgated, and the deity of Christ compromised?] • The last three points (in fine print below ad border): "The NRSV: Most Accepted" [by whom?] • "Most Accurate" [by what measure?] • "Most Ecumenical" [Bingo! This one the copywriters got right.]

A LOOK AT THE "SPIRITUAL FORMATION" OF THE RENOVARÉ EDITING TEAM

RICHARD FOSTER [Excerpt from Ray Yungen's letter, "Richard Foster: Promoting Eastern Mysticism by Proxy"]: "Richard Foster advocates a prayer movement that indeed can be proven to have strong links to Eastern mysticism.... To proclaim to be evangelical in every aspect but to say, 'Thomas Merton tried to awaken God's people'...is a contradiction of major proportions. It is an oxymoron to try to lump Biblical evangelicalism and Thomas Merton together.... The fact that Foster quotes Merton 13 times in the latest edition of *Celebration of Discipline* is just further proof that he does indeed adhere to Merton's teachings.... Since Thomas Merton and Henri Nouwen mystically perceived the 'divine' in everyone this in effect made them New Agers.... Foster [is] promoting Eastern mysticism by way of proxy." [See TBC's offering list for Yungen's book, *A Time of Departing*]

DALLAS WILLARD: During an instructional role-play, this question was posed to Willard. [Hypothetical Seeker:] "I still struggle with how I should view those who have other beliefs. I'm not sure I am ready to condemn them as wrong. I know some very good Buddhists. What is their destiny?" [Willard:] "I would take [you] to Romans 2:6-10: 'God will give to each person according to what he has done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.' What Paul is clearly saying is that if anyone is worthy of being saved, they will be saved.... I am not going to stand in the way of anyone whom God wants to save.... It is possible for someone who does not know Jesus to be saved." ["A Conversation with Dallas Willard," *Cutting Edge*, Winter 2001, Vol. 5 No. 1]

EUGENE PETERSON: "The importance of poetry and novels is that the Christian life involves the use of the imagination, after all, we are dealing with the invisible. And, imagination is our training in dealing with the invisible, making connections.... I don't want to do away with or denigrate theology or exegesis, but our primary allies in this business are the artists.... Why do people spend so much time studying the Bible? How much do you need to know? We invest all this time in understanding the text which has a separate life of it's own and we think we're being more pious and spiritual when we're doing it.... [Christians] should be studying it less, not more. You just need enough to pay attention to God.... I'm just not at all pleased with all the emphasis on Bible study as if it's some kind of special thing that Christians do, and the more they do the better." ["A Conversation with Eugene Peterson," *Mars Hill Review*, Fall 1995, Issue No. 3: pgs 73-90]

CONTEMPLATIVE SANCTIFICATION: THE DARK SIDE OF MYSTICISM

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I Timothy 4:1; Jude 3 & 4; 2 Peter 2:1-3

I. Introduction: This paper will seek to show a spiritual connection between the internalization of mystical Christian experience and the modern invasion of the New Age into the Church. It will briefly evaluate the Contemplative View of Sanctification. It will display some contemporary New Age Doctrines and then move on to the modern Contemplative Prayer Movement. It will conclude with a warning to be ever alert to the creeping error of man- focused religious practices.

II. The Contemplative View of Sanctification:

A. Glenn Hinson in his chapter, "The Contemplative View" in the book, CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY, discusses the supposed benefits of contemplative sanctification. ¹

Hinson refers to knowing God on two levels. They are internal and external. The contemplative sought to develop the inner level. It is certainly true that many times we become so busy with the externals of the Christian life that we neglect the internal spirituality which is the engine that drives service. Contemplative sanctification attempts to counter that error by an excessive emphasis upon the inner life. Hinson refers to 17th century monk, Brother Lawrence, who learned to "practice the presence of God." Brother Lawrence was a Christian mystic who learned to meditate upon God during his 40 year career of washing pots and pans in the monastery dining hall.

Hinson attempts to define contemplation. "It has to do with loving attentiveness to God. It is based upon the premise that God is imminent in the created order, particularly in the human order."² In other words, the contemplative seeks to internalize his relationship to God. It appears that this internalization took years of meditation to develop in the life of the mystic Christian. The spiritual descendants of these "Desert Fathers" have adopted new age methods which expedite the process. The problem is that in its extremes such internal spiritual

¹*Five Views of Sanctification*. Ed. Donald Alexander, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1988.

²Ibid, p. 172

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experience may not "connect" with God at all. In fact it may be an invitation to demonic spirits to invade the life. It seems that in reading the mystics there was a common tendency to seek the experience rather than to seek God. Many became satisfied with the experience itself.

Hinson quotes other mystics. Some of their strange conclusions are inconsistent with true spirituality which is defined in Biblical revelation. I quote from a few of Hinson's examples.

Tielhard De Chardin, Jesuit Humanist, was evidently also a mystic. "The great mystery of Christianity is not exactly the appearance but the transparence of God

in the universe.”³

Bernard of Clairvaux, 12th century cleric, wrote of the coming of Christ. “I have felt that He was present . . . but I have never felt His coming or His leaving.”⁴

Richard Rolle, 14th century English Contemplative, described how he was sitting in chapel and “suddenly felt an unwonted and pleasant fire.”⁵

In early Christian centuries, “contemplatives” developed various schemes for paths to perfection. Their ultimate goal was union with God. For this reason they are charged with being “works religionists.” Their methods required that they attain purity of heart by abandonment of self and submission to God. Their error was in failing to recognize that the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification was by grace through faith even as is the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation. They were to discover that the result of spirituality by works of the flesh produces the catalog of wickedness described in Galatians 5:17-21.

While some of the mystics have had a positive influence on Christian poetry and hymnody, there are notable excesses. Hinson quotes poetry by mystics who describe their spiritual relationship with God in very carnal terms. Often their means of attaining the union which they desired was by suffering (often self imposed), remorse, sacrifice, and meditation. Their methods were the means of entering into the “dark night of the soul” where they would meet God. These ideas have borne fruit in the self inflicted pain of the flagellants, the self crucifiers, transcendental meditators, and spiritual recluses. The more recent fruit is found in a new ecumenism with Hindu and Buddhist philosophers.

³Ibid

⁴Ibid

⁵Ibid

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What is wrong with contemplative sanctification? Here are several observations.

1. The contemplatives sought to find union with God through a self induced altered state of consciousness that shut out the mind's relationship to physical reality.
2. The contemplatives sought spirituality, love and communion with God internally instead of through His word.
3. The contemplative sought to “empty themselves” in order to be filled with God.
4. The contemplatives misrepresented grace as God's favor which one could earn by various forms of self affliction or abasement. Grace cannot be earned.
5. The contemplative based his spirituality on feeling instead of the objective written revelation of the Bible.
6. The contemplative became focused upon the experience that he encountered in the “dark night of the soul” rather than in the God whom he was supposedly meeting there.
7. The contemplative perverted the meaning of the Cross of Jesus Christ, making it an experience rather than a historical event.
8. The contemplative tended to seek salvation in certain experiences instead of by faith in the person and work of Christ.

III. CRITIQUE OF NEW AGE TEACHING AS DESCRIBED BY CARM.⁶

A. What is the New Age Movement?

1. The New Age Movement has many sub-divisions, but it is generally a collection of Eastern- influenced metaphysical thought systems, a conglomeration of theologies, hopes, and expectations held together with an eclectic teaching of salvation, of “correct thinking,” and “correct knowledge.” It is a theology of “feel- goodism,” “universal tolerance,” and “moral relativism.”

2. In the NAM man is central. He is viewed as divine, as co-creator, as the hope for future peace and harmony. A representative quote might be: “I am affected only by my thoughts. It needs but this to let salvation come to all the world. For in this single thought is everyone released at last from fear.” (A course in Miracles, The Foundation for Inner Peace, Huntington Station, N.Y. Lesson 228, p. 461.)

3. Unfortunately for the NAM the fear they want to be released from might very well be the fear of damnation, of conviction of sin, and it is even, sometimes, of Christianity and Christians. Though the NAM is tolerant of almost any theological position, it is opposed to the “narrow-mindedness”
⁶*Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry*. www.carm.org 2002. Slick, Matthew. *Workshop Session IV - #23*

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of Christianity that teaches Jesus is the only way and that there **are** moral absolutes.

4. The NAM is difficult to define because “there is no hierarchy, dogma, doctrine, collection plate, or membership.” It is a collection, an assortment of different theologies with the common threads of toleration and divergence weaving through its tapestry of “universal truth.”

5. The term “New Age” refers to the “Aquarian Age” which, according to New Age followers, is dawning. It is supposed to bring in peace and enlightenment and reunite man with God. Man is presently considered separated from God not because of sin (Isaiah 59:2), but because of lack of understanding and knowledge concerning the true nature of God and reality.

B. The New Age Movement is a religious system with two basic beliefs: Evolutionary Godhood and Global Unity.

1. What is Evolutionary Godhood?

a. It is the next step in evolution. It will not be physical, but spiritual: For the most part, the NAM espouses evolution, both of body and spirit. Man is developing and will soon leap forward into new spiritual horizons. Many New Age practices are designed to push one ahead into that horizon. Some of them are astral projection which is training your soul to leave your body and travel around; contacting spirits so they may speak through you or guide you; using crystals to purify your body’s and mind’s energy systems; visualization where you use mental imagery to imagine yourself as an animal, in the presence of a divine being, or being healed of sickness, etc.

b. Evolutionary Godhood also means that mankind will soon see itself as God, as the “Christ principle.” The NAM teaches that man’s basic nature is good and divine. This opposes God’s Word which says . . .

i. that we are sinners: *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.* (Rom. 5:12, NIV).

ii. and that our nature is corrupt: *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.* (Eph. 2:3, NIV)

c. It teaches that since man is divine by nature, he then has divine qualities.

i. This is an important part of NAM thinking. Because the New Ager believes himself to be divine, he can then create his own reality. If, for example, a person believes that

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reincarnation is true, that’s fine because that is his reality. If someone he knows doesn’t believe in it, that is all right too because that is someone else’s reality. They can each have a reality for themselves that “follows a different path.”

d. In contrast to this, the Bible says that God alone is the Creator: *This is what the LORD says – your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself.* (Isa. 44:24, NIV).

e. The New Ager who believes in his own divinity and ability to create usurps the authority and position of God. He also is still listening to the lie of the devil who spoke to Eve and said she would be like God. (Gen. 3:5).

2. Reincarnation

a. Though not all New Agers adhere to reincarnation, most believe in some form or another. And, many believe the Bible was changed to remove any verses that might have taught reincarnation. But this accusation only shows the limitation of their knowledge. The Bible never had any references to reincarnation.

b. Reincarnation opposes the Word of God which says that it is appointed for man to die once, and after this come judgment. (Heb. 9:27).

3. The second major element of the New Age Movement is Global Unity which consists of three major divisions: Man with Man; Man with Nature; and Man with God.

a. Man with Man.

The NAM teaches that we will all learn our proper divine relationship with one another and achieve harmony and mutual

love and acceptance through the realization and acceptance of this divine proper knowledge.

- i. Within this hoped harmony is economic unity. The average New Ager is looking for a single world leader who, with New Age principles, will guide the world into a single harmonious economic whole.
 - ii. It is also hoped that this leader will unite the world into a spiritual unity; that is, a one world religion.
- b. The New Age hope is reminiscent of the Scriptures that speak of the coming Antichrist:

i. 2 Thess. 2:3-4, *Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be*

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God. See also Rev. 13:17; 14:9, 11; 16:2; 19:20.

c. Man with Nature

- i. Since the NAM says that God is all, and all is God, then nature is also part of God. Man must then get in tune with nature and learn to nurture it and be nurtured by it. In this, all people can unite.
- ii American Indian philosophies are popular among New Agers because they focus on the earth, on nature, and man's relationship to them.
- iii. New Age philosophy generally seeks to merge with those philosophies that put man and nature on an equal level. We are no more or less important or different than our cousin the animal, bird, or fish. That we must live in harmony with them, understand them, and learn from them, is the general philosophy of the New Age. This is opposed to the Scriptural teaching of man's superiority over animals (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:19). This does not mean that Man must abuse what he is over, but Man is given the responsibility of caring for and being stewards of God's creation (Gen. 2:15). God will hold Christians responsible for the stewardship that has been entrusted to them.
- iv. The New Agers have a name for the earth. It is Gaia. Gaia is to be revered and respected. Some New Agers even worship the earth and nature. This opposes the Scripture that says we are not to have any other gods before God (Exodus 20:31).

d. Man with God

- i. Since the NAM teaches that man is divine by nature, all people, once they see themselves as such, will be helped in

their unity of purpose, love, and development. The goal is to fully realize our own goodness. It is obvious that this contradicts Scriptures, c.f., Rom. 3:10-12: *As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

4. Additional beliefs of the NAM view of God are:

a. He (it) is impersonal, omnipresent, and benevolent – therefore he (it) won't condemn anyone.

i. The New Age god is impersonal. An impersonal god will not reveal himself nor will he have specific requirements as to morality, belief, and behavior. This is why reincarnation appeals so much to them. With it, there is no judgment, there is a second chance, a third chance, and fourth, etc.

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ii. It should be noted that because the New Ager seeks to elevate himself to godhood, he must lower the majesty and personhood of the true God. In other words, the universe isn't big enough for one true God, but it is big enough for a bunch of little ones.

b. There are not moral absolutes in the New Age. Therefore, they claim to have a spiritual tolerance for all "truth systems." They call this "harmonization."

i. There is an obvious problem here. To say that there are no moral absolutes is an absolute in itself which is self contradictory. Also, if morality is relative, then stealing may be right sometimes, along with lying, adultery, cheating, etc. Living in a world of moral relativism would not bring a promising future.

ii. It would follow that if reality is relative and truth is too, then driving a car would be difficult. After all, if one New Ager thinks the light is red and another thinks it is green, when they collide, their different realities will come crashing down on them. That is something most interesting about New Agers, they don't live what they believe. That is because in reality, New Age thinking doesn't work.

iii. The New Age movement **does** espouse honesty, integrity, love, peace, etc. It just wants to do it without the true God. It wants to do it not on His terms, but on its own.

C. What the New Age Movement does.

1. It is a sponge that attempts to absorb all religions, cultures, and governments.

2. It seeks to unify all systems into one spiritual, socio-economic unity.

3. It uses various means to have mystical experiences with God and/or nature and/or self. Some of the methods we described in *Omni Magazine (How*

to *Have a Mystical Experience*. Dec. 1988, p. 137-145) as **imagining**, where you are told to imagine your own reality; **transcendence**, going beyond the limits of time; **sleep deprivation**, with the purpose of inducing a mystical experience; **focusing**, “to experience all of reality as unified and not as a collection of disparate objects;” **avoidance**, where communication with the outside world is stopped in order to reinterpret the world without its influence on you; **identification**, “To trade places mentally with a dog or a cat, canary, or animal in the zoo;” **reflection**, an exercise designed to help you to view the year to come, differently; and **star-gazing**, “to induce a sense of objectivity about your life and a feeling of connectedness to the rest of cosmos.”

D. What the New Age Movement does not do.

1. It does not teach that man is a sinner - Rom 5:12; Eph. 2:3.

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2. It does not teach that man is dependent upon God for all things - Isaiah 43:7; James 1:17.

3. It does not teach that punishment is eternal - Rev. 14:11.

4. It does not teach that the wages of sin is eternal separation from God - Rom. 6:23; Isaiah 59:2.

5. It does not teach that Jesus is the only way to God - matt. 11:27; John 14:6.

6. It does not accept Christianity as the truth - 2 Tim. 3:26.

E. New Age Terminology

1. According to the Bible, Man is the image bearer of God (Gen. 1:26), and as such is a creature of speech. Remember God said, . . . *Let there be light* (Gen. 1:3).

2. In the New Age, words are very important. In fact, the New Age has some of its own special words. Some of them are: Holistic, holographic, synergistic, unity, oneness, harmony, at-one-ment, transformation, personal growth, human potential, awakening, networking, energy, and consciousness. These words are prevalent in New Age conversations and writings.

3. In fact, if you were to go to a New Age bookstore and read the titles of their books, you would see a disproportionate amount of them containing the word “self.”

F. The New Age Interpretation of Christianity

1. God is not a personal heavenly Father but an impersonal force.

2. God is all and all is God. God is not the “wholly other” creator of all, but part of all that exists.

3. There is nothing that is not god. (This is pantheism.)

4. There is no sin, only incorrect understanding of truth. Knowledge is what saves, not Jesus.

5. Hell is not a place but an experience here on Earth; it is a state of mind.

6. Jesus was just one of many way-show-ers of divine truth. He exemplified the Christ consciousness probably better than anyone else.

7. Christ is a consciousness, a form of the higher self. It is possessed by all

because everyone is divine. "It is not Christ that can be crucified" (Miracles, Lesson 303, p. 441).

8. "A miracle is a correction . . . It merely looks on devastation, and reminds the mind that what it sees is false. It undoes error" (Miracles, p. 164). A miracle to a New Ager is not God's intervention into this world to perform His will but the realization of the true reality that God is all and that you are God.

G. The New Age View of Man

1. Since all is God, and man is part of all, then man is God. This is

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pantheism.

a. This is an eastern mystical belief system that has crept into mainstream America.

b. God is not part of creation. He is separate from it and made it (Isaiah 44:24).

c. Man is not God, he is a creation (Gen. 1:26).

2. Therefore, man is good by nature.

a. Man is not good by nature (Eph. 2:3)

3. Man has infinite potential.

a. This arrogant conclusion based upon false concepts of grandiose self worth, is deceptive, self-satisfying indulgence into pride. As Satan wanted to be like God (Isaiah 14:12-17) and encouraged Adam and Eve to be like God also (Gen. 3:1-5), the New Ager listens to the echo of that Edenic lie and yields to it willingly.

4. Man is one with the universe.

a. Again the difference between man and creation is blurred. Man is made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). The universe is not. Man is different than creation.

H. The New Age View of Salvation

1. Salvation in the NAM means to be in tune with the divine consciousness.

a. In tune means to be in harmony with reality and whatever is perceived to be true.

2. Since the NAM doesn't acknowledge sin or sinfulness, there is no need for a redeemer like Jesus. Salvation, to them, is simply the realization of our divine nature. "I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me. Salvation of the world depends on me" (Miracles, Lesson 206, p. 380). Such arrogance is mind-boggling.

3. It is a form of knowledge, of achieving correct thought. Therefore we need to be saved from ignorance, not sin.

4. Salvation, in the New Age sense, is self achieved through understanding your natural godlikeness and goodness, combined with proper knowledge.

As you can see, the New Age Movement is not a biblical teaching by any means. It is a false

religious system authored by the Evil One. It contradicts Christianity in almost all of its main

tenets. It is to be avoided, to be guarded against, and to be destroyed. And so it will on that glorious day when the Lord Jesus returns.

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BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

1. God is personal. If God were impersonal, then the following qualities could not be His.
 - a. God speaks and has a self given name: "I AM" (Exodus 3:14)
 - b. God is long suffering, (Psalm 86:15; 2 Peter 3:15).
 - c. God is forgiving (Daniel 9:9; Ephesians 1:7; Psalm 86:5).
 - d. God hates sin (Psalm 5:5-6; Habakkuk 1:13).
2. Man is not divine, but a sinner (Romans 3:23).
 - a. He is deceitful and desperately sick (Jer. 17:9).
 - b. He is full of evil (Mark 7:21-23).
 - c. He loves darkness rather than light (John 3:19).
 - d. He is unrighteous, does not understand, does not seek for God (Rom. 3:10-12).
 - e. He is helpless and ungodly (Rom. 5:6).
 - f. He is dead in his trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).
 - g. He is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. 2:3).
 - h. He cannot understand spiritual things (1 Corinth. 2:14).
3. Salvation is not correct thought, but deliverance from the consequence of our sin (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9).
 - a. Salvation is God's deliverance from damnation (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 1:18; 2:5; 5:9).
 - b. This salvation is found in no one but Jesus alone (Acts 4:12).
4. Miracles are from God not from the mind of man (Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 17:12-19; John 2:1-11).
 - a. Miracles imply an action by someone that is greater than ourselves. If God is impersonal, miracles cannot occur. But they do occur today as well as in Bible times and are not simply proper thoughts or understanding.
5. Christ means "anointed. Jesus was the Christ, the anointed one." It does not mean a consciousness or quality of people. Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Deliverer from sin.
 - a. Jesus is the Christ (Matt. 16:16, 20; Luke 9:20).
 - b. *Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory (Luke 24:26).*
 - c. *Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day (Luke 24:46).*
 - d. . . . *we have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ) (John 1:41).*
 - e. *He [David] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ . . . (Acts 2:31).*
 - f. . . . *God has made Him both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified (Acts 2:36).*
 - g. *For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).*
 - h. *Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (Rom 6:4).*

i. Christ is crucified (1 Cor. 1:23).

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j. You sin against Christ (1 Cor. 8:12).

k. The blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16).

6. Only the Bible has the message of Grace. Grace is the unmerited favor of God upon His

people. Grace is the undeserved kindness of God. Grace is getting the blessings we do not deserve. At the death of Christ we are blessed; we are given grace; we are given eternal life and forgiveness of sins. Only Christianity has the message of free forgiveness given. Every other religious system on earth has some form of salvation dependent totally or in part on what the adherents do. Not so with Christianity.

7. Humanity is not unlimited, but just the opposite: it is under bondage (Romans 5:12).

Sin

is its master and a deadly and deceitful one at that.

8. True morality is that which is revealed by God in the Bible (Exodus 20). Anything else is

only an imitation, a set of ideas laid down by man that originate from the mind of sinful man.

9. The Bible opposes almost all the tenets of the New Age Movement. As Christians, we should be watchful to recognize what is false and teach what is true. We should be wary because the Edenic lie still rings strong in the hearts of the deceived – and they want us to believe as they.

NOTE: This ends the material supplied by CARM. This and other material can be downloaded

from <www.carm.org>.

IV. The New Age Invasion into Western Christianity⁷

A. The Method: Contemplative Prayer

A new form of spiritual renewal is being promoted today in churches. It is called contemplative prayer. Rather than a meditation upon God, it is an attempt to shut down the mind by breathing exercises or repeating a mantra. In Christian circles this mantra is called a “sacred word” or a “prayer word.”

The premise is that God can never be really known in a conventional way. Thus the mind has to be turned off so that one can enter the darkness where God waits.

This darkness may be called “the cloud of unknowing.” The method purports to find Christ within the dark night of the soul if you use a Christian prayer word.

The author quotes William Johnston in his “Letters to Contemplatives” op.cit., *7A Time of Departing*. Silverton, OH: Lighthouse Trails Pub. Co., 2002. Yunger, Ray.

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p. 13; “When one enters the deeper layers of contemplative prayer one sooner or later experiences the void, the emptiness, the nothingness . . . the profound mystical silence . . . an absence of thought.”⁸

This teaching is not new. It was espoused by medieval mystics such as Meister Eckhart, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and Julian of Norwich. They looked back to the “Desert Fathers” for mystical examples. We would recognize men like Simon the Stylite and other early monastics as the “Desert Fathers.”

We may also recognize the method as New Age or Eastern Mysticism as practiced by Hindus and Buddhists. This method would hardly impress God. If I called you on the phone and began repeating your name endlessly, you would hang up on me. I maintain that God is not called up like some genie in a bottle. When a person “enters the silence” (his mind is shut down), the mind is receptive to demonic delusions. This method is used by New Age channellers to communicate with their higher selves, the Christ within, or a demonic personality with a strange name and another gospel.

B. The Men

Here is a list of some of the contemporary advocates and leaders in the contemplative prayer movement.

M. Scott Peck wrote *The Road Less Traveled*.” His books are found in the self help sections of many bookstores. He teaches that the individual should seek to become wholly God. He claims that the New Age concepts he teaches have been promoted by Buddha, Jesus Christ, Lau-Tse, and many others. He practices contemplative prayer through which God speaks to him. Former Vice President Al Gore has endorsed at least one of his books.

Thomas Merton, a popular writer and speaker (among Roman Catholics and mainline Protestants) who models his contemplative prayer methods after the Moslem Sufis. Sufism teaches its devotees to chant the name of Allah. He uses this prayer method to merge with the divine oneness.

Henri Nouwen. Nouwen was a Roman Catholic theologian. He was popular with the Christian intelligentsia, both Catholic and Protestant. He was ranked second to Billy Graham in influence among them. He read and endorsed books by Asian mystics. His use of contemplative prayer led him into Pantheism.

Thomas Keating and **Basil Pennington** are two Catholic monks. They blended

8Ibid, p. 38.

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Christianity with Eastern mysticism. They have written several books and are popular speakers. They believe that contemplative prayer leads into the “silence” which they say is the language of God.

Gerald May is a psychiatrist and founder of Shalem Prayer Institute in Washington, D.C. He has written several books in which he promotes a mystical Pantheism.

Morton Kelsey is an Episcopal priest and a popular author. Contemplative prayer has led him to believe that most New Age practices are found in Christianity.

John Main is a Benedictine Monk who applied Hindu mantra techniques to contemplative prayer. Since his death in 1982 a vast network of mantra prayer groups have sprung up.

Matthew Fox is an Episcopal priest and author with a large following among Catholics and Protestants. Contemplative prayer has led him to promote Pantheism.

Richard Foster is an Evangelical who follows the teachings of Thomas Merton. He holds self- help seminars in evangelical churches, passing himself off as a Christian. He miss-applies scriptures teaching New Age philosophies and

contemplative prayer. His goal for his listener is that they find God and help for their lives in “the silence.”

Brennan Manning is a former Catholic priest and a popular author. Admirers include Max Lucado, Amy Grant, and Michael Card. Phillip Yancy recommends Manning to his readers.

Books by these and other authors are flooding Christian bookstores. One of the most popular is **Jack Canfield's**, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. The book promotes occult writers. Other books are being produced with similar themes – *Hot Chocolate for the Mystical Soul*, *Nurturing Spirituality in Children*, *Chicken Soup for the Conscious Soul*. Many writers are promoting Reike, an occult healing practice based upon the flow of energy from a healer to a sick person. Other books promise help with stress and business decisions. These books and others placed in Christian and secular bookstores are leading some 40 million Americans into New Age philosophy and lifestyle.

The popular talk show hostess, **Oprah Winfrey** promotes New Age mysticism. *Workshop Session IV - #23*

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Many of her guests are popular New Age Christians and non Christians.

Psychologist **Dr. Larry Crabb** promotes contemplative prayer claiming that Christians all over the world are preparing to abandon their old ways of the written word for the new way of the spirit.

John Gray is a popular speaker and author of *Men are from Mars, Women from Venus*. He lived as a monk in the mountains for nine years to learn how to experience his inner connection to God. Now he promises that many of the people in his seminars are able to do the same thing in as little as two days.

Dr. Rodney R. Romney, pastor of First Baptist Church of Seattle calls himself a New Age Christian. He finds wisdom in the “silence.” He receives vocal instructions to promote oneness and unity. It is not God in the silence, but deceiving spirits.

C. The Mess

1. Roots of contemplative prayer go back to the early Middle Ages. There were hermits who settled in small isolated villages, devoting their lives completely to God without distinction. These men were and still are referred to as the *desert fathers*. Hinson's article, *The Contemplative View* uses the term on page 177. Ray Yungen uses the term on page 44 in his book, *A Time of Departing*. Hinson is defending contemplative sanctification while Yungen is analyzing contemplative prayer. This and other similarities reveal a connection between the two. These *desert fathers* were the first known “Christians” to use the mantra as a prayer tool. Daniel Galman in his book, *The Meditative Mind* wrote:

“The meditation practices and rules for living of these earliest Christian monks bear strong similarity to those of their Hindu and Buddhist renunciate brethren several kingdoms to the East . . . the meditative techniques they adopted for finding their God suggest either a borrowing from the East or a spontaneous rediscovery.”⁹

Fr. Ken Kaisch in *Finding God* wrote:

“It was a time of great experimentation with spiritual methods.

Many different kinds of disciplines were tried, some of which are too harsh or extreme for people today. Many different methods of prayers

⁹Ibid, p. 45.

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were created and explored by them.”¹⁰

The *desert fathers* believed that anything could be used to reach God if the desire was sincere. Thus if a method helped Hindus reach their God, then Christian mantras could be used to reach Jesus. Today, the contemplatives teach the same thing. Non-Christian sources are legitimate means to spiritual growth. The Christian who only uses his Bible will be spiritually impoverished. Tilden Edwards in *Living In His Presence* wrote:

“In the wider ecumenism of the Spirit being opened for us today, we need to humbly accept the learnings of particular Eastern religions. . . . What makes a particular practice Christian is not its source, but its intent . . . this is important to remember in the face of those Christians who would try to impoverish our spiritual resources by too narrowly defining them. If we view the human family as one in God’s spirit, then this historical cross- fertilization is not surprising . . . selective attention to Eastern spiritual practices can be of great assistance to a fully embodied Christian life.”¹¹

“New Age therapist Jacquelyn Small lists contemplative prayer as a gateway to the spirituality to which she belongs. She explains it as: ‘A form of Christian meditation,’ its practitioners are trained to focus on an inner symbol that quiets the mind . . . When practitioners become skilled at this method of meditation, they undergo a deep trance state similar to auto-hypnosis.”¹²

In Matthew 6:7 Jesus admonished us, “And when you pray, do not use vain repetition, as the heathen do.” Jeremiah 10:2, “Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.”

2. Contemplative prayer is sensual as well as spiritual. It is sensual in that men are drawn to experience the “experience” to the exclusion of the God they claimed to seek. It is spiritual in that some form of message (either an impression or oral) is given to the meditator when he reaches the true

¹⁰Ibid, p. 45.

¹¹Ibid, p. 46.

¹²Ibid. p. 48

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self or the inner light. The following quotations from Philip St. Romain illustrate.

“Then came the lights! The gold swirls that I had noted on occasion began to intensify, forming themselves into patterns that both intrigued and captivated me . . . There were always four or

five of these; as soon as one would fade, another would appear, even brighter and more intense . . . They came through complete passivity and only after I had been *in the silence* for a while (emphasis mine).”¹³

“After this, St. Romain began to sense “wise sayings” coming into his mind and felt he was “receiving messages from another.” He also had physical developments occur during his periods in the silence. He would feel “prickly sensations” in top of his head and at times it would “fizzle with energy.” This sensation would go on for days. The culmination of St. Romain’s mystical excursion was predictable: When you do *Christian yoga* or *Christian zen* you end up with *Christian samadhi* as did he. He proclaimed: ‘No longer is there any sense of alienation, for the Ground that flows throughout my being is identical with Reality of all creation. It seems that the mystics of all the world’s religions know something of this.’”¹⁴

“The significance of this work, perhaps, lies in its potential to contribute to the dialogue between Christianity and Eastern forms of mysticism such as are promoted in what is called New Age spirituality.”¹⁵

Philip St. Romain claims to be a devout Christian in good standing with his church. He claims to believe in salvation. Yet he writes:

“I cannot make any decisions for myself without the approbation of the inner adviser, whose voice speaks so clearly in times of need . . . there is a distinct sense of an inner eye of some kind “seeing” with my two sense eyes . . .”¹⁶

¹³Ibid. p. 50

¹⁴Ibid, pp. 50, 51.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 51.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 51

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3. Contemplative prayer is self-centered rather than God-centered.

Shirley MacLaine wrote:

“Coming into alignment with my Higher Self caused and expanded selfawareness in me, which automatically led me to an expanded awareness and a gentler understanding of others. At the same time, touching my Higher Self created a sense of being aligned with the *universal spirit*, so that I felt a keener understanding of the concept that *we are all one*. (emphasis mine)¹⁷

4. Contemplative prayer is univeralistic. Henri Nouwen wrote:

“Today I personally believe that while Jesus came to open the door to God’s house, all human beings can walk through that door, whether they know about Jesus or not. Today I see it as my call to help every person claim his or her own way to God.”¹⁸

5. Contemplative prayer is Ecumenical

“The author shows a wonderful openness to the gifts of Buddhism, Hinduism and Moslem religions. He discovers their great wisdom for the spiritual life of the Christian . . . Ryan [the author] went to India to learn

from spiritual traditions other than his own. He brought home many treasures and offers them to us in the book.¹⁹

6. Contemplative prayer leads to Pantheism.

7. Contemplative prayer tends to all of the demonic deceptions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufism, and Cabalism.

8. *Contemplative prayer fails every test of biblical Christianity.*

a. It receives revelation without the Word.

b. It swallows the lie of Satan to Eve, “Ye shall be as God.”

c. It is evolutionary bringing about a newly evolved creation of “great men of renown.”

d. It is a source of great demonic deception and false doctrine.

e. It is ecumenical, blending Christianity with Eastern religions.

¹⁷Ibid, p. 62

¹⁸Ibid, p. 64

¹⁹Ibid, p. 64.

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f. It is without power to sanctify the believer morally or spiritually.

INTRODUCTION
BIBLICAL PRAYER
CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER
FALSE TEACHINGS
UNFRUITFUL RESULTS
AVOID FALSE TEACHINGS

Our pastor, David L. Brown, approached my husband Mike and me asking if I could take the time to carefully research and publish a report on Contemplative Prayer. This is the report he requested. Its purpose is to compare the Bible's model for prayer to Contemplative Prayer thus exposing the grievous errors of Contemplative Prayer. It is a condensed **Contemplative Prayer: Seducing Spirits and a Doctrine of Devils**

By Christine A. Narloch

Republished: 04/06/06 overview providing a springboard for further research.

INTRODUCTION

According to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*, "contemplate" is defined as "to view or consider with continued attention; to study; to meditate on." ¹

"Prayer" is defined as "in worship, a solemn address to the Supreme Being, consisting of adoration, or an expression of our sense of God's glorious perfections, confession of our sins, supplication for mercy and forgiveness, intercession for blessings on others, and thanksgiving, or an expression of gratitude to God for his mercies and benefits." ²

Yet there is a type of prayer being taught today which is far from the above definitions and even further from Biblical prayer. It's known as Contemplative Prayer. Since the Bible is to be our guideline for faith and practice and since we are to use it to discern good from evil (Hebrews 5:14, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Acts 17:11), let's compare the teachings of Biblical prayer to those of Contemplative Prayer.

BIBLICAL PRAYER

According to the Bible, prayer is talking to God the Father (Philippians 4:6), through the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:23), by people who are born again (John 3:7), according to the Scriptures (Micah 7:7, Psalm 4:3, 1 John 5:14,15).

The Bible is clear, the prayers of unbelievers are not heard by God. *"Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."* John 9:31 *"The LORD [is] far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous."* Proverbs 15:29 (Psalm 34:16, Proverbs 15:8a). Nor are prayers of disobedient born again believers heard. *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear [me]."* Psalm 66:18 (Proverbs 28:9, James 4:3, 5:16c).

God hears the prayers of repentant sinners turning to Christ as Savior (Mark

1:15), and obedient believers. *“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” 1 John 3:22* (1 John 5:14, John 15:7, Psalms 34:15, Proverbs 15:8b).

There are many examples of Old Testament believers who prayed. Just a few include: Abraham, Moses, Daniel, David as well as Elijah, Ezekial, Ezra, Nehemiah and Habakkuk. Abraham prayed for a son, he prayed for Ishmael, for Sodom, and for Abimelech, (Genesis 15-24). Daniel prayed for the Jews, (Daniel 9:3-19) and for knowledge (Daniel 2:17-23). David prayed for the Jews, for knowledge, for blessing, for help, for guidance, for grace, and for justice.

Examples in the New Testament of those who prayed include Jesus praying to God the Father at Lazarus’s tomb (John 11:41-42). Jesus prayed submitting to the Father’s will (Matthew 26:39-44), and he asked God to forgive those who crucified him (Luke 23:34).

The Lord Jesus Christ prayed for believers of that day (John 17:9), and future believers (John 17:20). He requested they be sanctified by the truth (John 17:17).

He instructed his disciples to pray to God the Father (Luke 11:2), specifically for the Kingdom to come, for God’s will to be done, for daily food provision, for their sins to be forgiven, they would forgive others, they not be lead into temptation, and to be delivered from doing evil. His instructions to believers include to pray with humility (Luke 18:13), to pray alone (Matthew 6:6), for those who despitefully use them (Luke 6:28), that God would send people to preach the gospel (Luke 10:2), and as you pray, forgive others (Mark 11:2). Jesus promised that the Father rewards those openly who seek Him in prayer privately (Matthew 6:6).

When the Apostle Paul prayed, he prayed with understanding (1 Corinthians 14:15), and with joy (Philippians 1:4). He prayed for believers not to do evil but good (2 Corinthians 13:7), to be filled with knowledge, wisdom and understanding, (Colossians 1:9) to abound in love, understanding and all judgment (Philemon 1:9), to be without wrath and doubt in God’s Word (1 Timothy 2:8), to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17), to pray when afflicted (James 5:13), to pray for one another, (James 5:16) and to pray against evil, (Ephesians 6:12,18). Paul requested prayer for himself and those with him to preach the word boldly (Ephesians 6:18-19), that the word they share would do it’s work, (2 Thessalonians 3:1) and that they would have a good conscience (Hebrews 13:18).

In Proverbs 2:1-11, God promises to answer prayers of believers who ask to understand His word and desire to obey it. He provides knowledge, wisdom and understanding through the words of His mouth which are written in the Bible. It states:

- ¹ My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;
- ² So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;
- ³ Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;
- ⁴ If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;
- ⁵ Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.
- ⁶ For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.
- ⁷ He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.
- ⁸ He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.
- ⁹ Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.
- ¹⁰ When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;
- ¹¹ Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

An entire book of examples concerning prayer in the Bible could and perhaps should be written. This was just a sample.

Additionally, for believers who aren't able to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes according to God's will (Romans 8:26) and Jesus who is now at the right hand of the Father, intercedes for believers (Romans 8:34).

The Bible also contains several warnings concerning prayer. "Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen [do]" (Matthew 6:7), do not pray self-righteously (Luke 18:11), avoid hypocritical prayer, praying to be seen of men (Matthew 6:5) or praying to show off in front of others (Luke 20:46, 47).

With these examples and instructions in mind, let's now examine Contemplative Prayer.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

In the 1970's, three mystic Roman Catholic monks, Fr. William Meninger, Fr. Basil Pennington and Abbot Thomas Keating (head monk) labeled Centering Prayer as a "method of prayer, which prepares us to receive the gift of God's presence, traditionally called contemplative prayer". It is "...the opening of mind and heart - our whole being - to God... whom we know by faith is within us... Contemplative Prayer is a prayer of silence, an experience of God's presence..."

3

The Contemplative Outreach Ltd. website featuring Thomas Keating's teachings, provides further insight into the method of Contemplative Prayer and lists the guidelines to practice it. It states:

"This method of prayer is a movement *beyond* conversation with Christ to communion with Him." "The source of Centering Prayer, as in *all methods* leading to Contemplative Prayer, is the indwelling Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. " "It is also inspired by writings of major contributors to the Christian contemplative heritage including John Cassian, the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Francis de Sales, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Thérèse of Lisieux, and Thomas Merton." *Emphasis Added*

Contemplative Prayer “Guidelines include:

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God’s presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God’s presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts*, return ever-so gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

**Thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections.” 4*
Emphasis Added

In my research, it became clear that these Roman Catholic monks were influenced by pagan Eastern Religions. “During the twenty years (1961-1981) when Keating was abbot, St. Joseph’s held dialogues with Buddhist and Hindu representatives; and a Zen master gave a week-long retreat to the monks. A former Trappist monk who had become a Transcendental Meditation teacher also gave a session to the monks.” 5

Not Prayer But Mystical Meditation

Contemplative Prayer is not Biblical prayer at all, rather it is a type of mystical meditation leading the mind into an altered state of consciousness. It goes *beyond* thought, providing an *experiential* union with so-called God or with nature producing body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections.

It is based on “experiences” rather than sound doctrine. “... *give attendance... to doctrine.*” 1 Timothy 4:13. Faith is to be based on God’s word rather than experiences. “*So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17, “*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*” 2 Corinthians 5:7.

Contemplative Prayer is also known as centering prayer, listening prayer, breath prayer, and prayer of the heart. It is just one of many mystical practices taught within a confusing, mixed-up movement called Contemplative Spirituality.

Mystical practices are now widely embraced and taught in secular and professed Christian seminaries, colleges, universities, organizations, ministries and seminars, etc. throughout the United States. Academic promoters have introduced these practices into the fields of medicine, business and law while countless secular and Christian books, magazines, seminars, and retreats are teaching lay people how to incorporate them into their daily lives. Promoters promise physical, mental and spiritual benefits desiring to bring about positive social change.

One promoter of mystical practices, the “Center for Contemplative Mind in Society”, states:

They “can play a part in the positive transformation of governments, businesses, and organizations. We are dedicated to the idea that contemplative awareness, when incorporated into contemporary life, can help produce a more just, compassionate, and reflective society.”⁶

The following Contemplative Practices are listed on their website:

- Movement (martial arts, dance, yoga, labyrinth walking, etc.)
- Creation (singing, chanting, art, music, etc.)
- Relational (dialogue, deep listening, storytelling, journaling, etc)
- Ritual/cyclical (shabbot, vision quest, sweatlodge, alter building, ceremonies/rituals etc,)
- Activist (work, pilgrimage, mindfulness, vigals/marches, etc.)
- Generative (prayer, lectio divina, petitionary prayer, etc.)
- Stillness (silence, prayer centering, insight & sitting meditation, quieting & clearing the mind)”⁷

Emphasis Added

Stillness, listed as the last practice includes prayer centering also known as Contemplative Prayer.

Contemplative Prayer is Practiced Far and Wide

While Western religions falsely label Contemplative Prayer as “Christian” and “prayer”, Eastern Pagan religions such Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufi Muslims have long practiced mystical meditation. A variety of occult and New Age devotees also practice mystical meditation styles consistent with Contemplative Prayer.

Since this method of meditation is mystical in nature, it is important that you know the definition of “**mysticism**”. An on-line Occult Encyclopedia defines it as:

“A belief in or the pursuit in the unification with the One or some other principle; the immediate consciousness of God; or the direct experience of religious truth. Mysticism is nearly universal and unites most religions in the quest for divinity.”

It goes on to state, “Mysticism from the East or from Western traditions relies on techniques such as:

- repetitive prayers,
- repeating over and over a word or phrase (mantras, which maybe names of deity),
- contemplations of icons or images real or imagined,

- also involved are methods of emptying the mind,
- extreme asceticism and
- in some cultures the use of hallucinogenic drugs.”

“Through these and other methods the mind goes blank or passive and one enters an altered state of consciousness. Buddhists call this state Nirvana or Satori... New Age people call it at-one-ness, etc..., Christian mystics perceive they have experienced some kind of ecstatic union with God.” ⁸

“In mysticism, the altered state of consciousness may be total or partial. When partial, the state of consciousness is usually only a feeling. Most generally this feeling is one of unity with God, or the universe, or of enlightenment.” “The experience of being united with God or nature is called a mystical experience.” ⁹

Philosopher W. T. Stace, “discovered seven common themes of mysticism when studying Roman Catholic, Protestant, ancient classical, Hindu, and American agnostic mystical experiences. They were (1) a unifying vision and perception of the One by the senses and through many objects; (2) the apprehension of the One as an inner life; (3) and objective and true sense of reality; (4) feelings of satisfaction, joy, and bliss; (5) a religious element that is a feeling of the holy and sacred; (6) a paradoxical feeling; (7) and inexpressible feelings.” ¹⁰

Are They Experiencing God or Seducing Spirits?

Contemplative Prayer is described as “an experience of God’s presence” and “movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him” resulting in “...body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections”. ¹¹

So whose “presence” are these people really experiencing? Interestingly, the Universal Gnostic Church provides some insight through their guidelines for “*Working With Your Spirit Guides*”:

“If you do not already know your spirit guides, we recommend you start speaking to them. The basic way of doing this is through meditation and listening to your intuitive insights.”

“Meditation: Meditation is a process of *moving your consciousness into higher planes* while remaining in the physical plane. There are several meditative techniques. The Universal Gnostic Church teaches three excellent techniques for those who want to work with their spirit guides. Essene Healing Breath Meditation, Kriya Power Meditation, and *Contemplative Meditation*.”

“If you already know who your spirit guides are, we recommend you work with them on a regular basis. You can do that through channeling, visualization and ritual, divination and *prayer*.”

”Channeling: Channeling is a process of recording or repeating out loud for

others what your spirit guides tell you or show you. You can do this by writing it all down or by recording it with an electronic device. You may also do it by repeating what is said in a private session or to a large group. You may allow your spirit guides to bring other disincarnate people to deliver messages to you. When you channel, you're working with your spirit guides."

"Visualization and Ritual: Visualization of your spirit guides is a step toward seeing them in the physical dimension. The easiest way to learn how to visualize your spirit guides and guardian angel is through the teachings of the Magickal Order of the Golden Dawn. They teach both the skills of visualization and ritually working with your spirit guides and guardian angel."

"Prayer. Praying with your spirit guides is an excellent way to develop a closer relationship with them. The Universal Gnostic Church recommends Intentional Prayer and Contemplative Prayer for that purpose." *Emphasis Added*

12

Regardless of what the "presence" is labeled (Spirit Guides, Guardian Angels, Jesus, God, etc.) these people are actually experiencing seducing spirits also known as demons (1 Timothy 4:1,7).

And this is all accomplished through various methods of Spiritism, also known as Necromancy.

"Spiritism or Necromancy is an occult activity grounded in the belief that through certain persons acting as mediums or channels (psychics, necromancers, channelers, etc.) the dead or the spirit world can be contacted and hidden information can be acquired from those contacted. Trances and seances are often used by the medium. The power behind this activity is demonic. This activity is forbidden by the Lord. 1 Chronicles 10:13, So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it. (1 Sam. 28:7 gives the context)." 13

In the case of Contemplative Prayer, the individual is really acting as the channeler or necromancer communicating with demons. This is strictly forbidden in the Scriptures.

"When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Deuteronomy 18:9-12

Thus, those who practice and promote Contemplative Prayer are really an abomination unto the LORD!

Quotes from Promoters of Contemplative Practices

We "should all without shame enroll as apprentices in the school of contemplative prayer."
—Richard Foster, Pastor and Author of the book "Celebration of Discipline", p. 13, 1978 ed.

Recommends "Richard Foster's meaningful work... Celebration of Discipline..."; p.15
"Discipline. This is the means for having *intimacy* with God. ... Discipline is control gained by
enforced obedience. It is the deliberate cultivation of *inner order*.
So how are intimacy and discipline connected? ...Discipline is the means to that end.", p.21
—Chuck Swindoll, Pastor and Author of the book "So, You Want to Be Like Christ? Eight
Essentials to Get You There."

(Note: Understanding and obeying God's word as well as prayer is the means for having
intimacy with God.

Not the "discipline" of contemplative practices providing mystical experiences.)

"Contemplative prayer is nothing other than coming into consciousness of what
is already there."
—Brennan Manning, Catholic Priest and Author of the book "Signature of Jesus"

"Use 'breath prayers' throughout the day, as many Christians have done for centuries.
You choose a brief sentence or a simple phrase that can be repeated to Jesus in one breath."
—Rick Warren, Pastor and Author of the book "The Purpose-Driven Life", p. 89.

"Choose a sacred word or phrase. Consistently use the same word throughout the prayer.
Begin silently to repeat your sacred word or phrase"
—Mark Yaconelli, Youth Specialties, National Pastor's Convention

"As we find ourselves caught up in this meditation, we soon enough realize another change has
occurred.

We have almost effortlessly been transported over into a passive "contemplation" beyond
thoughts, emotions, images, forms, or words."
—John Michael Talbot, Christian Musician

Promoters of Contemplative Practices

The following is a list of *just some* of the secular and religious promoters of
Contemplative Prayer provided by the "Lighthouse Trails Research Project" ¹⁴
website:

BAILEY, ALICE : Founder of the Arcane School, an offshoot of Theosophy - authored several books
through a "spirit guide."

BLANCHARD, KEN: Founder of Ken Blanchard Companies and "Lead Like Jesus" Leadership
Conferences.

BROTHER LAWRENCE: (1605-1691) Carmelite layman, author of "Practicing the Presence of God".
Believed God was in all things.

CANFIELD, JACK: Creator and author of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series. *New Age.

CRABB, LARRY: *Christian Clinical Psychologist, author, Spiritual Director and Advisor for American
Association of Christian Counselors.

EDWARDS, TILDEN: Founder of the Shalem Prayer Institute in WA, DC

FOSTER, RICHARD: Quaker and Founder of Renovare and author of "Celebration of Discipline", *the
General Editor of "Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible", and "Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home".

FOX, MATTHEW: Former Dominican priest and author of "The Coming of the Cosmic Christ";
developed Creation Spirituality; believes that God and Christ are in all things.

KEATING, THOMAS: Catholic monk, Co-father of the modern day Contemplative Prayer
Movement. <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/manning.htm>

KIMBALL, DAN: Author of *"The Emerging Church"* and a leader in the Emerging Church Movement. Promotes labyrinths and lectio divina.

MANNING, BRENNAN: Former Catholic priest, author of *"Ragamuffin Gospel"*, and *"Abba's Child"*.

MARX HUBBARD, BARBARA: Influential New Ager who says of Christians: "Unaware of our evolutionary potential, they [Christians] prevent the action and response needed to transcend the terrestrial phase of our existence. They would annihilate the possibility of Universal Humanity by claiming we have no right to achieve it."

MCLAREN, BRIAN: Considered the main leader of the Emerging Church Movement, *New Age Promoter, Pastor

MERTON, THOMAS: Now deceased Catholic monk *who wanted "to become as good a Buddhist as I can."
(Steindl-Rast, 1969); quoted often by Richard Foster.

NOUWEN, HENRI: Deceased Catholic theologian, *Contemplative Universalist, author of *"In the Name of Jesus"* and *"The Way of the Heart"*.

PECK, M. SCOTT: *Psychiatrist, Author of *"The Road Less Traveled"*.

SCHULLER, ROBERT: Pastor of Crystal Cathedral and the "Hour of Power" television program.
*Promotes Psychology

SANFORD, AGNES: *Author of *"Healing Light"*, taught that the "Kingdom of God is within you".

SHANNON, WILLIAM: New Age biographer of Thomas Merton.

TEASDALE, WAYNE: Coined the term "interspirituality".

TERESA OF AVILA: *Catholic nun, author of *"Book of Foundations"*, Quoted by Foster, Peterson.

UNDERHILL, EVELYN: *Roman Catholic, author of *"Mysticism"*, wrote 39 books and over 350 articles.

WALSCH, NEAL DONALD: Author of *"Conversations with God"* and New Age leader who said, "The era of the Single Savior is over. What is needed now is joint action, combined effort, collective co-creation." p. 157

WARREN, RICK: Pastor and author of the *"Purpose-Driven Life"*. *Promotes his Global P.E.A.C.E. plan involving 400,000 churches.

WILLIAMSON, MARIANNE: Contributed to making *"A Course in Miracles"* well known; currently involved with the Department of Peace.

YACONELLI, MIKE: The late founder and owner of Youth Specialties; promoted Contemplative Spirituality. [Mike passed away in 2003].

YACONELLI, MARK: Son of the late Mike Yaconelli - very active in the Contemplative Prayer Movement.
*Extra notes added by author.

Additional Promotors

BLACKABY, HENRY: Author of *"Experiencing God"* workbook and seminars. Taught among SBC and Roman Catholics. Promoted by Rick Warren.

HYBELS, BILL: Pastor of Willowcreek Community Church, Hosts conferences with Contemplative Speakers such as Larry Crabb and Brian McLaren. Hosted *"Lead Like Jesus"* 2004 Conference with Ken Blanchard.

JEREMIAH, DAVID: Pastor of "Turning Point Ministries", Author of *"Life Wide Open"*, Speaker at Ken Blanchard's "Lead Like Jesus Seminars" and America Association of Christian Counselors.

LUCADO, MAX: Author and Founder of UpWords. Speaker on an instructional DVD on Contemplative Prayer, titled "Be Still" which includes Richard Foster.

MONK KID, SUE: Mystic Author of *"God's Joyful Surprise"* a spiritual memoir describing her advent into contemplative Christian spirituality and *"When the Heart Waits"*.

MOORE, BETH: Founder of Living Proof Ministries for women. Speaker on an instructional DVD on Contemplative Prayer, titled "Be Still" which includes Richard Foster.

NEE, WATCHMAN: Mystic Author of *"The Spiritual Man"*.

ORTBERG, JOHN: Author of *"Closer Than You Think"*, 2005 favorably quotes contemplatives.

PETERSON, EUGENE: Author of *"The Message"* bible translation and the book *"The Contemplative Pastor"*. Endorses Foster.

SENGE, PETER: Buddhist, Author and Founder of Society for Organizational Learning. New Age.

SMITH, MICHAEL W.: Christian Musician. Promoter of Brennan Manning's book *"Above All"*.

STANLEY, CHARLES: SBC Evangelical Pastor, Author *"How to Listen to God"*. Espouses the belief that God continues to speak to man today *outside* of His Word. In the 9/93 *In Touch* magazine, Stanley quotes favorably from mystic Richard Foster's book *"The Celebration of Discipline"* (9/22).

STANLEY, ANDY: Pastor, Spoke at Ken Blanchard's *"Lead Like Jesus"* Conference in October, 2005.

SWINDOLL, CHUCK: Evangelical Pastor of "Insight for Living", author of *"So, You Want to Be Like Christ? Eight Essentials to Get You There."* (A book on the solitude and silence of Contemplative Prayer.)

TALBOT, JOHN MICHAEL: Christian Musician. Practices Tai Chi and Yoga. Writes on "Christian Meditation".

Christian College Promotors

Many Christian Colleges promote Contemplative Spirituality. They include Wheaton College Graduate School, Biola University, Dallas Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. For a complete list, visit the “Lighthouse Trails Research Project” website. ¹⁵

Promoted through Church and Ministry Programs

Programs promoting Contemplative Practices include: Alpha Courses, Taizé, Lectio Divina, The Labyrinth (prayer walk), Renovaré, Guided Imagery, Walk to Emmaus, Cursillo, Centering Prayer, Ignatian Awareness Examen, The Jesus Prayer, and The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. ¹⁶ Ministries include: Youth Specialities, Youth for Christ, Nav Press, Church Growth Institute and Awana Clubs. ¹⁷

Promoted through the Emerging Church Movement

Another whole paper could be written on the Emerging Church movement lead by Brian McLaren. In my research, I’ve discovered this movement is fueled by those who are tired of the Mega churches and desire to experience “so-called” God in a fresh and new way. Much of the movement includes Contemplative Practices. Interestingly, Rick Warren is excited about such a movement. ¹⁸

The Goal

One of the goals mentioned earlier is to bring about social change. Yet in reality, it is contributing to a universal spirituality (religious or irreligious) apart from the Bible.

Ray Yungen, author of “A Time of Departing” states <http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/featurewriters.htm> “...contemplative prayer also stands on the threshold of exploding worldwide. Dr. Larry Crabb, spiritual director for the 50,000 member American Association of Christian Counselors, has written the foreword to a recent book ³⁷ that expounds on the future of spiritual direction in the evangelical church. The authors the book promotes are... Nouwen, Merton, Foster, Keating, Pennington, etc. ...With that in mind, Dr. Crabb predicted: ‘The spiritual climate is ripe. Jesus seekers across the world are being prepared to abandon the old way of the written code for the new way of the Spirit.’” ¹⁹ *Emphasis added.*

When Clinical Psychologist, Larry Crabb advocates not walking in “old way of the written code”, he means abandoning a careful, obedient walk of faith according to all of God’s word. The “new way of the Spirit” means utilizing Contemplative Practices to experience God. The Bible says, “*Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye*

in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where [is] the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk [therein].”

Contemplative Outreach Ltd. states (of the false church), “For the Church's first sixteen centuries Contemplative Prayer was the goal of Christian spirituality. After the Reformation, this living tradition was virtually lost. Today, with cross-cultural dialogue and historical research, the recovery of the Christian contemplative heritage has begun. The method of Centering Prayer, in the tradition of *Lectio Divina* (praying the scriptures) is contributing to this renewal.”

²⁰ *Lectio Divina* is a mantra whereby a single phrase or word of scripture is repeated over and over; leading to an “experiential” union with “so-called” God. It’s a vain repetition strictly forbidden in the Bible.

The goal of the true Biblical church is the Great Commission given to believers by Jesus Christ - not Contemplative Prayer. “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:19-20*

Promoters of Contemplative Practices are not teaching the commands of Jesus Christ.

FALSE TEACHINGS

After comparing Scriptures pertaining to Biblical prayer to the teachings of Contemplative Prayer, **the error is glaring**. None of these contemplative practices are advocated in Scripture. When anyone chooses not to abide by sound doctrine, the result is a faulty faith based on experiences or fables instead of the sure Word of God. Scripture states, “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” 2 Timothy 4:3,4*

Listen to this observation by David W. Cloud: “The mystical “spirituality” that is so popular in evangelical and charismatic circles today is a yearning for an experiential relationship with God that downplays the role of faith and Scripture and that exalts “transcendental” experiences that lift the individual from the earthly mundane into a higher “spiritual” plane. Biblical prayer is talking with God; mystical spirituality prayer is meditation and “centering” and other such things. Biblical Christianity is a patient walk of faith; mystical spirituality is more a flight of fancy. Biblical study is analyzing and meditating upon the literal truth of the Scripture; mystical spirituality focuses on a “deeper meaning”; it is more allegorical and “transcendental” than literal.” ²¹

True faith can only come by the hearing of the Word of God. “*So then faith*

[cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God". Romans 10:17 The mind of the believer is then to be transformed by the Word of God which reveals God's will for the believer. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* Romans 12:2 All of the mind is to be used to love God according to His Word. *"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."* Matthew 22:37

Believers are to have a sound mind. *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* 2 Timothy 1:7. **A mind in an altered state of consciousness inviting demon activity is anything but a sound mind. It is entertaining a seducing spirit masquerading as an angel of light, 2 Corinthians 11:14.** Every thought of the believer is to be brought to the obedience of Christ rather than influenced by demons, our own flesh or the world. *"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"* 2 Corinthians 10:5.

UNFRUITFUL RESULTS

Contemplative Practices are infiltrating evangelical and fundamental churches which is contributing to the unbiblical Ecumenical movement already underway. This is due to Pastors ignoring sound doctrine and allowing false teachings.

Ecumenicalism (also known as Interdenominationism, Interfaith, and Interspiritualism) is a movement toward a worldwide false church consisting of religions (including false, apostate Christians) joining together by:

1. Agreeing on a portion of biblical doctrines or as they often state "core teachings,"
2. Ignoring the remaining biblical doctrines and
3. Promoting false doctrines. (Psychology, Evolution, Contemplative Practices etc.)

It is a religious unity movement falsely promoted in the name of God's love yet it is not based on the full counsel of God. This false Ecumenical unity causes great confusion and error to those not well grounded in God's Word.

In Richard Foster's book "Streams of Living Water", he says the following with regard to his vision for "a great gathering of the people of God: "I see a Catholic monk from the hills of Kentucky standing alongside a Baptist evangelist ... I see a people". 22

"Contemplative consciousness," says [Thomas] Merton, is "a trans-cultural, trans-religious, trans-formed consciousness ... it can shine through this or that system, religious or irreligious" 23

So what does the Bible have to say when it comes to dealing with false teachings? God commands true believers to *"...come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" 2 Corinthians 6:17.*

Contemplative Prayer appears to be paving the way to the False Prophet's One World Religious system mentioned in Revelations 17 and 18. Revelation 18:4, though specifically referring to the time when the Antichrist rules on earth, offers good advice for believers to follow today in the matter of demonic teachings such as Contemplative Prayer -- *"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."*

AVOID FALSE TEACHINGS

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself [rather] unto godliness." 1 Timothy 4:1, 7

First, if you are not born again according to the Word of God, I would invite you to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Second, to protect yourself from seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, use the King James Version of the Bible. Despite numerous myths, thorough research reveals the KJV is the most accurate English word for word translation. It includes all of the words; no verses or portions of verses are missing. The Bible says "every word" of God is important (*Proverbs 14:15, Proverbs 30:5, Matthew 4:4*). Modern counterfeit bibles including "The Message" by Eugene Peterson and "Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible", have replaced God's words with New Age terminology further deceiving unsuspecting readers.

Dave Hunt expresses his concern. "Many Christian leaders promote wicked Bible versions such as Eugene Peterson's The Message (NavPress, 1993: see TBC Oct '95) that pervert God's Word. Men like Peterson have no conscience about changing what God says, replacing His words with their own. Peterson is praised for this perversion by many Christian leaders such as J.I. Packer, Warren Wiersbe, Jack W. Hayford, and Richard Foster, founder of the Renovare Movement and General Editor of the "Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible" (Harper San Francisco, 2005".²⁴

Third, study the Scriptures in their context and define the words using *Strong's* Concordance. False teachings are typically based on Scriptures, or portions of verses, taught outside of the context they were written. Satan misquoted God's Word to Jesus himself. Yet, Jesus defeated Satan by quoting Scripture accurately.

Fourth, have faith in what God teaches you in His Word and obey it. Satan is great at leading people to doubt God's Word. Remember, the old Serpent deceived Eve, leading her first to doubt His Word, then deny God's Word, which lead to her deifying herself – she chose her own way instead of God's way. (Genesis 3:1,4,5)

Fifth, before you choose to read any literature, research the authors' beliefs and practices. Understand their definitions for terms and compare them to scripture. Also, learn who they endorse and associate with.

Sixth, if you realize you have accepted a false teaching, confess it as sin, repent and obey the scriptures. The Scripture promises *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."* James 4:7

Seventh, earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 1:3), by warning others of false teachings. *²Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove (convict), rebuke (admonish), exhort (instruct) with all long suffering and doctrine.* 2 Timothy 4:2

Eighth, practice biblical separation from those who will not repent of false teachings. *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; 18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."* 2 Timothy 2:15-18

ENDNOTES:

1 Webster's 1828 Dictionary,
<http://www.cbtministries.org/resources/webster1828.htm>

2 Webster's 1828 Dictionary,
<http://www.cbtministries.org/resources/webster1828.htm>

3 Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.
<http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/cntrqpryr.htm#Centering%20Prayer>

4 Contemplative Outreach, Ltd. <http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/methodcp.htm>

5 Catholic Answers, "The Danger of Contemplative Prayer" by By Rev. John D. Dreher,
<http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/1997/9711fea1.asp>

6 The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society,
<http://www.contemplativemind.org/about/faq.html>

7 The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society,
<http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree.html>

8 Mystical Deception Files by Noah Dove, <http://www.dtl.org/cults/article/mystical.htm>

9 The Mystica Mythical-Folk, Occult Encyclopedia,
http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/a/altered_states_of_consciousness.html

- 10 The Mystica Mythical-Folk, Occult Encyclopedia,
<http://www.themystica.org/mystica/articles/m/mysticism.html>
- 11 Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.
<http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/methodcp.htm>
- 12 Universal Gnostic Church, <http://universalgnostic.com/guides/>
- 13 Logos Resource Pages, “Primer For Recognizing Occult Practices”,
http://www.logosresourcepages.org/Occult/occult_primer.htm
- 14 Lighthouse Trails Research Project,
<http://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/glossarynames.htm>
- 15 Lighthouse Trails Research Project,
<http://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/Colleges.htm>
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<http://www.thebereancall.org/Newsletters/2000+Newsletters/4493.aspx>
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- 18 Lighthouse Trails Research Project,
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- 19 A Time of Departing by Ray Yungen, p.137; 37 -David G. Benner, Sacred Companions: The Gift of Spiritual Friendship & Direction, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 2002, p.9
- 20 Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.
<http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/cntrgpryr.htm>
- 21 Way of Life, David Cloud, <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/eugenepeterson-the-message.html>
- 22 Council for Christian Colleges & Universities, article titled “Richard Foster”
<http://www.cccu.org/chem/profileID.69/profile.asp>
- 23 “Thoughts on the East” p.34 by Thomas Merton
- 24 Dave Hunt, The Berean Call, August 2005 Newsletter,
<http://www.thebereancall.org/Newsletters/2005+Newsletters/107940.aspx>