

Resisting the Mystical:

Staying Afloat on an
Ocean Full of
Shipwrecks

by Scott Murray Noble

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Special thanks to my anonymous editors!

May we learn from history and not
repeat the mistakes of the past. May our prayer lives be
blessed in fellowship with God and effectiveness for God's
Kingdom, worshipping God in spirit and in truth and also praying in that
attitude. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him
in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

Table of Contents

Preface	5
Introduction	8
Part I: The Early Years	
1: Pre-Christian Background	11
2: Doctors and Desert Dwellers.....	18
3: Chart #1- Logic Expelled and Minds Deserted	40
4: Events in the East at This Time (Part 1).....	46
5: Manna or Egypt?	54
Part II: The Middle Years	
6: The Franciscans and Other	57
7: Chart #2- Similarities Between Buddhism and Catholicism.....	70
8: Bernard the Mystic	72
9: Events in the East at This Time (Part 2).....	76
10: Sheep in Wolves' Clothing?	80
Part III: The Latter Years	
11: Ignatius of Loyola.....	84
12: Teresa of Avila	96
13: Chart #3- Catholic and Buddhist Spiritualities.....	103
14: John of the Cross	109
15: "Brother" Lawrence.....	112
16: Madame Guyon	116
17: Thérèse of Lisieux	121
18: "Mother" Teresa and Three Recent Popes.....	126
19: Events in the East at This Time (Part 3).....	133
20: Jesus or Mary?	138
Part IV: Summary	
21: Overview and Review	142
22: Some Thoughts on Biblical Prayer.....	158
23: Chart #4- Mystical Concepts in Prayer vs. Biblical Prayer.....	173

Appendix 1-Logic: A Gift From God Not To Be Thrown Out The Window 175

Appendix 2- Recipe for Shipwreck: Misguided Endorsements of Madame Guyon's Works 194

Appendix 3- The Mystical Roots and Fruits of the Quakers212

Appendix 4- Other Modern Authors Pointing to Rome225

Appendix 5- IHOP: Mystical Dominion230

Appendix 6- The Titanic: Redemption in the Midst of a Shipwreck 238

References240

Preface

The Antidote to Spiritual Shipwreck

There are many ways that a ship can suffer shipwreck. It can be attacked by another ship, be destroyed by an accidental fire, have a leak, fracture because the materials used to build it were not strong enough to weather storms, be capsized in turbulent waters, sink from being overloaded with cargo, run across sharp objects in shallow water, crash into another ship, be abandoned by the crew, be dashed against rocks for lack of warning from a lighthouse, etc. Some shipwrecks affect many people, such as in the cases of oil tankers, or passenger ships. Other shipwrecks affect only a few people. The United Nations has calculated that currently there are more than 3 million shipwrecks at the bottom of the ocean (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shipwreck>).

Spiritual shipwrecks occur much more frequently than physical ones (based on the odds given by Jesus in the parable of the sower in Mark 4, and comparing the number of people in the world with the number of ships). Physical shipwrecks often result in huge losses, but spiritual shipwrecks are even more devastating.

The apostle Paul wrote, "...thrice I suffered shipwreck..." (2 Corinthians 11:25) Paul was probably not the owner of any of those three ships. He would have suffered the inconvenience of needing to find another means of travel and maybe some other inconveniences, but the owner of those ships bore the big losses-- they could have gone bankrupt or been in big trouble for losing valuable cargo.

Paul actually suffered shipwreck at least four times, because the above verse from Second Corinthians was written around 57 AD, about 4 years before the shipwreck of Acts 27 took place. The book of First Timothy was probably written in about 63 AD, after these four shipwrecks, when Paul made the comparison of a person's faith being able to be shipwrecked. In the book of First Timothy, having a good and pure conscience is connected with maintaining faith:

"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." (1Timothy 1:19)

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling." (1Timothy 1:5-6)

"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." (1Timothy 3:9)

The verses in First Timothy which are especially descriptive of Catholic theology, also make the connection between faith and conscience:

"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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:1-3)

In contrast to the "doctrines of devils," which resulted in a seared conscience, Timothy is admonished to be nourished in the words of faith and good doctrine and also is admonished to remind the brethren of these things:

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained." (1Timothy 4:6)

In the last chapter of First Timothy, Paul also gives a warning about "science" which in the Greek is the word "gnosis." In other words, he is warning about false knowledge, a very appropriate warning for mystics who add to and take away from God's Word, in order to arrive at "special knowledge" or "gnostic ways" of praying. This false knowledge leads to erring from the faith:

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith...." (1Timothy 6:20-21)

Erring from the faith, departing from the faith, and having one's faith shipwrecked are all very serious and are caused when a person buys into the doctrines of devils (a.k.a. false knowledge). Good doctrine (the Bible) believed and lived is the antidote to spiritual shipwreck.

Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) If people are immersed in mysticism, which are the "commandments of men," then their faith is already shipwrecked-- they worship God in vain. We must worship God in spirit and in truth. Likewise if people abandon sound doctrine, shipwreck is the result: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (I John 1:9) God can heal even a shipwrecked faith if a person repents of compromise and stops adding to and taking away from His Word.

In the Bible we have all the good counsel we need to set our compass on a course for heaven, to navigate around dangerous zones, to beckon us to call on the Lord for our help, comfort, and encouragement-- the One who promised never to leave nor forsake us. The Bible also bids us to introduce others to come to know and love this Lord of ours.

Much that is written in this book is about avoiding shipwreck, but I hope also that in taking a look through history we will learn not only how NOT to pray, but also learn more clearly than before about how TO pray, and be motivated to renew our relationship with God in prayer. May God bless you to "stay afloat" on an ocean full of shipwrecks, reaching the heavenly harbor safely one day, and bringing others along with you (both through evangelism and prayer, and by helping others to avoid the dangers of false doctrines). Let us enjoy the blessedness of praying biblically, not adding to nor taking away from God's Word, but trusting the Lord as He helps us along.

Introduction

The Doctrine of King Saul: False Spirituality

In the letter to the church of Pergamos, Jesus said they held to "the doctrine of Balaam" (Revelation 2:14). Seeing that Balaam's life and beliefs were categorized as a "doctrine," made me wonder what "doctrine" other people in the Bible epitomized, and which person in the Bible best characterizes the false doctrine of mysticism. I would say King Saul is a very good candidate for this.

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king." (1Samuel 15:22-23)

1. Saul sacrificed instead of obeying. The mystics do this also, making repetitious prayers, sacrificing their time and energy, rather than praying the way Jesus taught us to pray.
2. Saul was a rebel, going to a woman who had a familiar spirit (I Samuel 28), when he could not get a message from the Lord. The mystics also seek for messages and experiences in illegitimate ways, apart from what is revealed in the Bible.
3. In his younger days, Saul was opposed to those with familiar spirits and wizards (I Samuel 28:9), but finally he rejected the word of the Lord. There are some authors who have likewise had a good beginning, but who finally rejected God's Word in favor of the false teachings of mysticism.
4. Saul was a persecutor of David, whose Psalms are great examples of biblical prayer. David in contrast to Saul, was a man after God's own heart (I Samuel 13:14). "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." (Galatians 4:29) The mystics were often persecutors of the true Bible

believers of the past. Like the Roman Catholic church, Saul used his political power to build his own kingdom instead of for doing God's will. 5. Saul's stubbornness was like idolatry, worshipping God in his own way, instead of the way God told him to. "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?" (Ezekiel 14:3) The mystics often use real idols and likewise display stubbornness to do things their own way.

The "doctrine of King Saul" is one to be avoided and recognized for what it is. Catholic mysticism that is being promoted these days is very much in the character of the "doctrine of King Saul." On the subject of prayer, David is a far better teacher, or Jesus, or Paul, or any biblical author. The mystics ADD TO and TAKE AWAY FROM the Word of God, not doing what God tells us, and compromising instead. Mystics throughout the ages have had God's priests killed-- God's children are called a holy and a royal priesthood in the New Testament (I Peter 2:5,9). Bernard of Clairvaux, the Franciscans, the Jesuits, and other mystics advocated killing true Christians. Many of the mystics were also terrorized by evil spirits (like Saul)--Antony of Egypt, Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, and others are examples of this.

Mysticism is very much oriented towards seeking "therapy" or an ecstatic experience, rather than repenting and doing things God's ways. Catholic mysticism also goes directly into witchcraft by seeking to communicate with familiar spirits such as "Mary," "Joseph," and other deceased saints. Let us not fear the people as King Saul did, but let us speak the truth in love, not compromising with the false doctrines of mysticism. King Saul ended up in witchcraft. The doctrines of mysticism, which promote a non-biblical spirituality (seeking spirituality apart from what God has revealed) also are a type of witchcraft, not to be dabbled in. Let us love the truth of God's Word, and from God's Word let us learn how to pray biblically, not through formulas and mystical techniques, but in a real relationship with God.

Part I:

The Early Years

"In the doldrums: Depressed; dull and listless. For example, Dean's in the doldrums for most of every winter. This expression alludes to the maritime doldrums, a belt of calms and light winds north of the equator in which sailing ships were often becalmed."

(<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/in+the+doldrums>)

Chapter 1

Pre-Christian Background

Water as far as the eye can see. Seemingly the ship has halted. Not enough wind for the sails. The sailors are eager to get going, but have to wait it out in the doldrums. Like the children of Israel wandering listlessly through the barren desert, sometimes Christians can feel themselves to be spiritually in the doldrums, a place where prolonged periods of boredom are experienced, wondering where the excitement of smooth sailing has gone.

Emotions are good when they are yielded to God's ways, but sometimes in the doldrums Christians seek after emotions, instead of seeking God. If we are to walk by faith, avoiding impulses to follow our emotions into the unbiblical techniques of mystical spirituality, we need to trust God's all-sufficient Word when we pray and let our feelings catch up later.

In this book we will see that there is much common ground between the philosophies of Buddhist and Catholic spiritualities-- one aspect of which will become clear in the chart in chapter 3-- intentionally tossing logic out the window. These ancient methods of spirituality, which are pagan in origin, are being repackaged and promoted as if they were "Christian" methods. From interaction between Buddhist India and the Greek Empire, to developments in Alexandria, Egypt, to how logic is viewed in Catholic and Buddhist spiritualities, to events in the East in general, in this first part of the book we'll look at some of the key figures and ideas related to Buddhist and Catholic spirituality.

The temple of the Old Testament was called a "house of prayer," but it wasn't limited to only praying. Jesus taught there daily. "...It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. And he taught daily in the temple..." (Luke 19:46-47) Jesus' apostles also taught daily in the temple. "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42) If we are to pray effectively, it must be based on correct teaching.

Gnostic Tendencies

The Buddhist path involves a type of Gnosticism, where supposedly hidden "gnosis" (knowledge) plays a key part. After meditating, the Buddha is reported to have said, "Thus I remembered my manifold past lives in their modes and details. This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose...." (Robinson, 35) In Buddhism "enlightenment" is based on a "special" and "hidden" knowledge not objectively available to the uninitiated. Among various mystics, this kind of unveiling of special knowledge is known as being "initiated" into the mysteries, or more commonly as "illumination." The obtaining of more knowledge is not always profitable (or wise). In the garden of Eden, the original temptation the devil used was to get Eve and Adam to seek forbidden knowledge, apart from God's revealed Word.

Plato (429-347 BC)

Robinson and Johnson of the universities of Wisconsin and San Diego State respectively, trace the probable influence of Indian and Buddhist ideas on Plato, Gnosticism, and the Catholic church. "...it is known that there was fairly extensive trade between India and the Mediterranean area in the era of the Greek city-states and the Roman Empire. This has led scholars to conjecture about whether the Platonic and Gnostic doctrines of the transmigration of souls [reincarnation/re-birth] originated in India, and also whether the references to Buddhism in the writings of Clement and Origen--two early Alexandrian fathers of the Christian church--can be taken as evidence that King Asoka's emissaries to the Mediterranean countries actually reached their destination....There is also the question of whether the Egyptian Desert Fathers were influenced by Buddhists or other members of the Indian Sramana movement. Because the Desert Fathers were the direct inspiration for the first Christian monastic orders, it is possible that Christian monasticism derived indirectly from the same sources as did Buddhism, if not from Buddhism itself. Finally, there is the possibility that the Christian cult of relics was originally inspired by the Buddhist example." (Robinson & Johnson, 297)

Some mystical ideas were present in Plato's thought. Rene Arnou wrote, "Platonic contemplation appears as a sudden and immediate vision of true Being....a union with the Supreme Good, a mysterious union which is not just the vision of an object by a subject, but the taking possession of the subject by a superior reality...." (McGinn, 1997; 28) Scholar Bernard McGinn wrote, "Divinization then is the goal of Plato's philosophy.... Plato's notion of divinization is not that of later Christian mystics, especially because of his teaching that the soul is naturally divine and not just divinizable..." (McGinn, 1997; 33)

"Plato used reincarnation concepts as a literary device in his stories and writings. Whether or not he actually believed the doctrine may never be known, but it was undoubtedly a popular and widely entertained belief in his time.... His doctrine of the immortality of the soul and the soul's de-identification with the body certainly encouraged speculation about reincarnation, or "transmigration of souls" as it was known to the Greeks. He speaks of it by quoting his mentor, Socrates (d. 399 B.C.), who referred to it laconically as "that ancient doctrine." (Albrecht, 32)

Plato put an emphasis on separating one's self from "material bonds," which is a concept seen in many ascetics, and one which Origen would later take to an extreme. "...Plato, who in the Theaetetus enjoined men to liberate themselves of all material bonds in order to elevate their souls to the radiant world of Ideas....significantly influenced subsequent mystical traditions of the Western world." (Marcoulesco, 241)

Before Asoka's Time

Asoka is considered by some to be the "Constantine" of Buddhism, since he put his kingly authority and influence to work for the cause of Buddhism. Before him, Alexander "the Great" had invaded parts of India, and left some Greek rulers behind. Asoka's grandfather, Chandragupta Maurya (340-298 BC), the founder of the Mauryan Empire, and the first to unify India, had dealings with one such Greek ruler, named Seleucus I Nicator (ca. 358-281 BC).

Emperor Asoka (304-232 BC)

Since before Asoka's grandfather's time, Greek influence was felt in India. Asoka inherited this Indian/Mauryan Empire. Although Asoka was not explicit in speaking about some of the main Buddhist doctrines, it seems clear that he did convert to Buddhism in some form.

There are two main sources giving details about Asoka's life, in addition to the Edicts. The Sanskrit Asokavadana was likely compiled in the 2nd century AD in Northwest India (Strong, 1989; xi-xii). The Pali Mahavamsa was compiled sometime in the 5th century AD in Sri Lanka. Both the Asokavadana and the Mahavamsa relate the story of King Asoka, but with great variations: According to the Asokavadana, even after Asoka's conversion he still retains his penchant for killing. "...Asoka shows no mercy toward Candargirika, his former executioner-in-chief, and has him tortured to death.... later on, he flies into a fury and has eighteen thousand heretics [Ajivikas] killed.... and then launches a veritable pogrom against the Jains, setting a bounty on the head of any heretic." (Strong, 1989; 41) On the other hand, "As one might expect, in the Sinhalese chronicle [the Mahavamsa], most of the negative side of Asoka's personality has been dropped." (Strong, 1989; 67)

Robinson says, "...Asoka made donations to all sects, but his support for the Buddhist Sangha [community of monks] was prodigious, reportedly causing recruits to flock to the order and demonstrating the oft-repeated rule that the survival and prosperity of Buddhism have usually depended on the support of rulers." (Robinson, 64)

Rock Edict 13 Also Sent to Greek Nations

Asoka sent Edict 13, which included five Greek rulers: Antiochus II Theos of Syria (261- 246 BC), Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt (285- 247 BC), Antigonos Gonatos of Macedonia (278- 239 BC), Magas of Cyrene (300- 258 BC), and Alexander of Epirus (272- 258 BC). Based on the dates of their respective rules, Edict 13 must have been written between 261 and 258 BC.

Rock Edict 13 states in part, "So, what is conquest through Dharma is now considered to be the best conquest by the Beloved of the Gods [a title used by Asoka]. And such a conquest has been achieved by the Beloved of the Gods not only here in his own dominions, but also in the territories bordering on his dominions, as far away as at a distance of six hundred yojanas [1 yojana = ca. 7 miles]...." (Seneviratna, 73)

One of the rulers named in Edict 13 was Ptolemy Philadelphus (Greek ruler of Egypt at that time), who sent his astronomer to India in 285 BC. "...Dionysius is the same man and none other whom Ptolemy Philadelphus sent into India." (Ussher, 481)

"...the edicts bearing this information were found in places like Kandahar in Afghanistan and Mansehra and Shahbazgarhi in Pakistan in areas abutting Greek territories and inhabited by Greeks. In fact, the adaptation of RE XIII [Rock Edict 13] which was found as far west as Kandahar was in Greek." (Seneviratna, 77)

The Debate of King Milinda

King Menander I "Soter" (reigned from ca. 165-130 BC), a Greek king who began ruling in Bactria (northern Afghanistan), and later expanded his kingdom, is thought to be Milinda, who is spoken of in the Pali Milinda Panha (the debate of king Milinda). "The style of the Milinda Panha is very much like a Platonic dialogue, Nagasena playing the part of Socrates and winning over King Milinda to the Buddhist view point..." (Pesala, xv) Hinuber writes, "Although Menandros [Menander] is a historical personality, Mil [Milinda Panha] is an ahistorical text: Milinda talks to the six heretics, who were contemporaries of the Buddha (!)" (83). Menander was separated in history from the Buddha by about 250 years.

400 Years of Oral Tradition

The Pali Canon was written down about 70 BCE in Sri Lanka (Veidlinger, 23): "Most scholars currently believe that the texts of the Pali Tipitaka were transmitted orally for about four hundred years, from the time of their genesis until the first century BCE." (Veidlinger, 2)

Making Buddhist Idols

In the same century the Pali Canon was put into writing, Buddhist idols also came onto the scene. "Early Buddhology found it inappropriate to represent the Buddha in iconic form because the Buddha had made it clear that he was not to be identified with his body. Why, then, did this attitude change in the first century B.C.E.?.... Buddhists watching trends in Hinduism, may have wanted a more personal focal point for their worship than the abstract stupa [a monument containing Buddhist relics]. A specifically Indian style of Buddha-image was developed in the upper Ganges city of Mathura.... Greek traditions also seem to have played a role in the development of the Buddha-image. In addition to Mathura, Gandhara in northwest India produced numerous early Buddha-images. This was an area that had experienced many foreign invasions and dynasties, and was thus open to Hellenistic [Greek] influences. The Gandharan Buddha greatly resembles Apollo and wears a Roman toga...." (Robinson, 104)

Transition From Greek to Roman

As prophesied by Daniel, following the Babylonian, Persian, and Greek kingdoms, a fourth kingdom would emerge-- the Roman Empire. Three major dates mark the move from a limited Roman Republic, to a vast Roman Empire. Erich Gruen cites one of these as being the battle of Actium in 31 BC. "...Octavian [a.k.a. Caesar Augustus] defeated their [Antony and Cleopatra's] forces in a naval engagement at Actium off the coast of northwest Greece.... Egypt and all of the East would now pay homage to the conqueror. Octavian had become the undisputed master of the Mediterranean world." (Gruen, 717) The other two events are as follows: "In 44 BC Caesar [Julius] became dictator for life, only to be assassinated a month later. The result was 17 years of civil war, which ended only in 27 BC when Augustus [a.k.a. Octavian] became Rome's first emperor." (Wild, 22)

Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 BC-AD 50)

"Philo was not the first, but was certainly the most influential, of those Jews who sought to meld Jewish and Greek approaches to the holy books..." (McGinn, 1997; 12) "Like Plato, Philo holds that ultimate bliss resides in the vision of God..." (McGinn, 1997; 39) "This ascent into an invisible region in order to be initiated into mysteries begins with a discipline of the body and an ascetical life-style that Philo sketched in his treatise *The Contemplative Life*...written in praise of the Therapeutae, an Essene-like Jewish contemplative group near Alexandria." (McGinn, 1997; 39)

McGinn comments on Philo and quotes him, "Philo gives greater emphasis than Plato to the role of ecstasy (ekstasis, literally, 'standing outside' [the self] in the upward path: '...but escape also from your own self and stand outside from yourself, like persons possessed and corybants seized by Bacchic frenzy and carried away by some form of prophetic inspiration. For it is the mind that is filled with the Deity and no longer in itself, but is agitated and maddened by a heavenly passion, drawn by the truly Existent and attracted upward to it." (McGinn, 1997; 39)

"Philo was the first to introduce into mystical literature the famous oxymoron of 'sober intoxication' (methe nephaliōs) to describe the way in which the mind is taken out of itself in the upward way." (McGinn, 1997; 39-40) Like the modern "Toronto Blessing" this is an unbiblical approach to drawing close to God.

Just as Philo tried to merge Jewish ideas with Greek ideas, others would later try to merge Christian ideas with Greek and Indian ideas. In Philo's case, this mixture ended up in "Bacchic frenzy" and a mind "taken out of itself." The later "Christian" mystics would end up with similar madness of thought, in search of special "gnosis" (knowledge). God's Word is pure (Psalm 30:5) and therefore should not be mixed and merged with pagan ideas.

Chapter 2

Doctors and Desert Dwellers

Pyramids, sand dunes, the Nile river, camels trekking through the desert...and lots and lots of monks. Usually when a person thinks of Egypt, monks are not the first thing that would come to mind. But, in a different era of history, Egypt was renowned and influential in the monastic movement. Antony is probably the most famous of these monks, but there were many men and some women who went into the desert for a solitary life of prayer. This heritage of monasticism in Egypt and the ideas that took root there have been carried on in the spirituality of the modern Catholic Church. Where did these ideas originally come from though?

Mark the Evangelist (died in AD 64)

The city of Alexandria, Egypt seems to be the epicenter of the acceptance and promotion of mystically and monastically inclined spirituality. Mark, who wrote the gospel of Mark, was killed in Alexandria for speaking the truth. "...in the eighth year of Nero, when he, at the feast of the passover, preached the blessed remembrance of the suffering and death of Christ, to the church at Alexandria, the heathen priests and the whole populace seized him, and with hooks and ropes which they fastened around his body, dragged him out of the congregation, through the streets and out of the city; so that his flesh everywhere adhered to the stones, and his blood was poured out upon the earth, until he, with the last words of our Saviour, committed his spirit into the hands of the Lord, and expired." (Van Braght, 166)

Clement of Alexandria (AD ca. 150-215)

A little over a hundred years before Clement, Philo had made mention of a contemplative group living near Alexandria. Clement of Alexandria mentioned the Buddha specifically along with other "philosophers" from India. "The Indian gymnosophists are also in the number, and the other barbarian philosophers. And of these there are two classes, some of them called Sarmanæ, and others Brahmins. And those of the Sarmanæ who

are called Hylobii neither inhabit cities, nor have roofs over them, but are clothed in the bark of trees, feed on nuts, and drink water in their hands. Like those called Encratites in the present day, they know not marriage nor begetting of children. Some, too, of the Indians obey the precepts of Buddha; whom, on account of his extraordinary sanctity, they have raised to divine honours." (Schaff, 1885; 684)

Gnosticism

"...the core ideas of the various forms of Gnosticism revolve around dualism, the innate divinity of the soul (or its higher part), and salvation through gnosis [knowledge]." (McGinn, 1997; 91)

Bill Randles, in his book "Making War in the Heavenlies: A Different Look," has a very informative section on ancient Gnosticism and modern Gnostic ways of thinking (such as Rhema doctrines a.k.a. the prosperity gospel). He writes, "Ironically, the Gnostics, who glorify a kind of salvation by knowledge, don't really value objective, doctrinal knowledge." (Randles, 1996; 159) Part of this "secret" knowledge in ancient Gnosticism was that the creation was supposedly botched up by an inferior deity. This is, of course, in contrast to the Bible's account, that it was people who botched up the perfect creation, through their disobedience to God.

In Robert Grant's review of the Gnostics, he says, "[Gnostics] were never willing to accept straightforwardly the accounts in the book of Genesis.... Many other creation myths are to be found in the Nag Hammadi collection [3rd to 4th century AD], but their basic pattern is one of distancing God from the world." (Grant, 57-58)

Concerning the Gnostic Nag Hammadi collection, Gary Byers wrote, "...13 leather-bound papyrus codices containing some of these actual documents were discovered in 1945, within a jar from a tomb near Nag Hammadi, Egypt....the 3rd- 4th century AD Nag Hammadi texts, were written on papyrus in Coptic (the ancient Egyptian language in Greek script...." (www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2006/06/14/After-the-Hype-The-Significance-of-The-Gospel-of-Judas.aspx)

From time to time the so called Gnostic gospels have been hailed as viable alternatives to the biblical gospels. However, the Gnostic material is sorely lacking in any real credibility.

Among other errors, some Gnostics promoted the idea of Docetism, "...the belief that Christ didn't really come in the flesh, He only seemed to. Remember, to a Gnostic, trying to escape the flesh is the ideal.... The world of the Gnostic is not the real world; it is the mystical, specious, spiritualized world. The excessive allegorizing of scripture is a Gnostic denial of Jesus in the flesh." (Randles, 1996; 167-168) "Many Gnostics were attempting to escape their body. The celibacy of the priests is not a Christian concept, it is Gnostic. So is Monasticism." (Randles, 1996; 161) This concept of escaping the flesh was found in Plato's "...de-identification with the body..." (Albrecht, 32), and also in the Buddha having "...made it clear that he was not to be identified with his body..." (Robinson, 104). In the search for special knowledge apart from God's Word, this excessive escape from the flesh would also be a key factor in the lives of various mystics-- like King Saul ordering a fast at the wrong time, when strength was needed to overcome God's enemies (I Samuel 14:30).

Origen (ca. AD 185-254)

"Twenty years older than that other great third-century Egyptian mystical thinker, Plotinus (both apparently studied under the mysterious and influential Platonist Ammonius Saccas), he was born into a pious Christian family of Alexandria about 185 C.E." (McGinn, 1997; 108) Although Origen was officially opposed to Gnosticism, yet in his extreme rejection of the body and the physical world, and in his speculative theology on various subjects, he ended up with equally serious errors. "Origen lived unmarried [he went so far as to castrate himself], without property, in constant prayer and meditation, abstaining from meat and wine and imposing the severest penances on himself; in fact, his life differed from that of later monks only in being passed [lived] in the midst of the world." (Gruetzmacher, 461) His stance against marriage and meat bring Paul's warning to mind. "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:1-3)

"Origen's ascetic life-style and his fostering of the ideal of virginity look forward to the 'monastic turn' in early Christian spirituality; and his thought, as mediated through Evagrius Ponticus, Gregory of Nyssa, Cassian, and others, was the major force that shaped the theology that grew out of the desert experience." (McGinn, 1997; 110)

Antony of Egypt (ca. AD 251-356)

One of the early "Desert Fathers," Antony of Egypt, abandoned his worldly goods to become a hermit at about the age of 18. There were "Christian" monks before him, but through his life the monastic movement became more widespread in the west, hundreds being inspired to live an ascetic lifestyle in the desert. His biography was written by one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church, Athanasius of Alexandria (AD ca. 296 -373), in about AD 360.

Concerning Antony's lifestyle, Athanasius wrote this, "He kept vigil to such an extent that he often continued the whole night without sleep; and this not once but often, to the marvel of others. He ate once a day, after sunset, sometimes once in two days, and often even in four. His food was bread and salt, his drink, water only. Of flesh and wine [like Origen he abstained from meat and marriage, again bringing Paul's warning to mind] it is superfluous even to speak, since no such thing was found with the other earnest men. A rush mat served him to sleep upon, but for the most part he lay upon the bare ground." (Athanasius, 620)

Besides the biography, there are also letters written by Antony.

"Attention has recently been focused on seven 'letters' of the hermit [Antony].... In a somewhat confused manner, they develop the 'Gnostic' concept of rediscovering through ascetic discipline and the Jesus prayer one's nature as pure intellect, as God had created it before the fall."

(Gribomont, 93) The mystical nature of this "Jesus" prayer will become clear later in this chapter.

Solitude and Mysteries

"And so for nearly twenty years he continued training himself in solitude, never going forth, and but seldom seen by any." (Athanasius, 624) "...he persuaded many to embrace the solitary life." (Athanasius, 625) "Antony, as from a shrine, came forth initiated in the mysteries and filled with the Spirit of God." (Athanasius, 625)

Battling With Demons

A major focus of Antony's life was his warfare against demons. Like many books on spiritual warfare nowadays, this was based on unbiblical ideas, focusing on our abilities instead of on Christ's victory and power. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Corinthians 15:57) Writing about Antony, Athanasius said, "And when the enemy could not endure it, but was even fearful that in a short time Antony would fill the desert with the discipline, coming one night with a multitude of demons, he so cut him with stripes that he lay on the ground speechless from the excessive pain... the torture had been so excessive that no blows inflicted by man could ever have caused him such torment." (Athanasius, 621)

"Once a demon exceeding high appeared with pomp... together with all his demons.... Often they would beat me with stripes, and I repeated again and again, 'Nothing shall separate me from the love of Christ,' and at this they rather fell to beating one another." (Athanasius, 637)

"[Antony] passed his life, and endured such great wrestlings, not against flesh and blood,' as it is written, but against opposing demons, as we learned from those who visited him. For there they heard tumults, many voices, and, as it were, the clash of arms. At night they saw the mountain become full of wild beasts, and him also fighting as though against visible beings, and praying against them." (Athanasius, 647)

In contrast to what the apostle Paul said, Antony and other mystics seem to have made "war after the flesh." Paul wrote, "For though we walk in

the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 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 10:3-5)

Even when Jesus was in the flesh and faced temptations from the devil, it was not a physical battle, but a spiritual battle, the devil trying to get Jesus to commit sin, and Jesus responding with truth, righteousness, the Word of God, and faith. This is also the meaning of Ephesians chapter 6:12 where we are told that, "...we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." After this verse, we are told to take up the armor of God. This spiritual armor consists of truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and prayer.

These are not carnal weapons, nor do we "war after the flesh" against our spiritual enemies. Jesus gave us the perfect example in His temptations, which looked nothing like the ordeals of Antony or other mystics. James summed up this process in one short verse. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) Francis of Assisi had similar experiences to those of Antony. "[Francis] prepared his soul to receive divine mysteries and illuminations, and his body to sustain the cruel conflicts with the demons, who often attacked him sensibly." (Ugolino, 99) Teresa of Avila also claimed to experience violent physical attacks from spiritual beings.

Busy With His Own Program

"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:2-3) "Antony departed, and again withdrew to his cell... his discipline was much severer, for he was ever fasting, and he had a garment of hair on the

inside, while the outside was skin, which he kept until his end. And he neither bathed his body with water to free himself from filth, nor did he ever wash his feet, nor even endure so much as to put them into water, unless compelled by necessity." (Athanasius, 644)

"...daily as though ever commencing he eagerly endeavoured to make himself fit to appear before God..." (Athanasius, 621) "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Galatians 2:16) Antony's works, no matter how severe and extreme, could not bring about his justification before God, which comes only by faith in Jesus Christ and His work on our behalf.

Other Desert "Fathers" and Their Unbiblical Ideas

Arsenius supposedly heard a voice which instead of directing him to have faith in Jesus Christ as the way to salvation, directed him to be saved by becoming a hermit monk: "The abbot Arsenius when he was still in the palace, prayed to God, saying, 'Lord, show me the way of deliverance.' And a voice came to him saying, 'Arsenius, flee from men, and thou shalt be saved.'" (Waddell, 63-64) Jesus, on the other hand, taught his disciples that they were to be in the world, but not of it: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:15-16)

Prayer for the Dead: One time, supposedly the head of a dead man spoke to Macarius imploring him to pray for the dead: "Wherefore in whatever hour thou hast had pity on them that are in torment and hast prayed for them, then are they a little consoled." (Waddell, 128)

Salvation by Works: "These be seven sayings which the abbot Moses spake to the abbot Poemen, which, if any keep, whether he be set in a monastery or in solitude, or in the world itself, he can be saved. 1. First, as it is written, a man should love God with all his soul and all his understanding: 2. A man should love his neighbor as himself. 3. A

man should mortify himself from all evil. 4. A man ought not to judge his brother in any conjuncture. 5. A man ought to do no hurt to any. 6. A man ought, before he go out from the body, to cleanse himself from all foulness of the flesh and spirit. 7. A man ought always to have a contrite and a humble heart." (Waddell, 155) The apostle Paul in contrast wrote, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." (Romans 10: 2-4)

Quieting the Inner Man: The abbot Abraham, in speaking of those who were not cloistered, but were "tillers of the ground," said they, "...cannot endure the long tarrying in their cell and the stillness of silence. For they have not learned to quiet the stirrings of the inner man and to beat up against the tempest of their thoughts with perpetual watchfulness...." (Waddell, 161) This quieting of the mind is not a biblical, but a Buddhist concept (please see the chart in chapter 3).

Ambrose (AD ca. 340-397)

Ambrose, one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church, studiously read Origen and Philo, which had an obvious effect on his way of thinking. McGinn writes, "Ambrose's role in the history of Western mysticism lies in three areas. The first is in his Christianization of important elements of Platonic and Neoplatonic thought.... Second is his putting the interpretation of the Song of Songs at the center of an ecclesial mysticism (that is, one realized only in and through the church and its sacraments). The third element is his joining of this mysticism to the new emphasis on the ideal of virginity." (McGinn, 1997; 203) "All the major figures in Latin Christianity between ca. 370 and 430 were avid proponents of the ideal of virginity and wrote extensively on the subject." (McGinn, 1997; 68)

Ambrose uses the metaphors of sleep and drunkenness to speak about the contemplative life. "The reference to mystical drunkenness

suggested by Song 5:1 allows Ambrose to describe the encounter between the passive soul drunk and oblivious to the world and the active Divine Lover- 'and the drunken soul is asleep to the world but awake to God....'" (McGinn, 1997; 208) Like other mystics, Ambrose emphasized the passive state of the soul.

"In northern Italy Ambrose was the most prominent promoter of monasticism; he founded in the suburbs of Milan a monastery modeled on the eastern type, though he maintained it with his own resources, which was a departure from the model." (Gruetzmacher, 465)

Jerome (AD ca. 347-420)

Jerome lived for a while as a hermit in a Syrian desert in an effort to do penance, and he promoted monasticism and asceticism. "During his Roman sojourn (382-385), Jerome labored for the promotion of monasticism.... By 412 Jerome was able to boast of 'many convents of virgins and an innumerable multitude of monks' in Italy."

(Gruetzmacher, 465) In contrast to what the Bible records, he believed that Mary was a perpetual virgin. He also claimed that the single life is better than the married life. "Jerome's defense of monasticism, especially evident throughout his letters, contributed much to the triumph of the monastic ideal in the West." (McGinn, 1997; 216) He was also one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church.

Evagrius Ponticus (AD 346-399) and John Cassian (AD ca. 360-435)

Speaking of John Cassian's early life, McGinn writes, "...he spent most of his Eastern monastic life on long visits to various monasteries in Egypt, interviewing famous abbots of the desert. A convinced Origenist who was much influenced by Evagrius Ponticus [a monk in Egypt], he fled Egypt ca. 400 during the Origenist controversy.... About 415 he settled in southern Gaul at Marseilles [modern France], where he founded two monasteries and advised the Gallic bishops about monasticism." (McGinn, 1997; 218) "The transplanted Easterner's [John Cassian's] main concern was with conveying to his Latin audience knowledge of the ascetical practices of Egypt...." (McGinn, 1997; 226)

In Kallistos Ware's "Ways of Prayer and Contemplation," he outlines Evagrius' teachings, "...the human mind has to rise above concepts, words, and images--above the level of discursive thinking-- so as to apprehend God intuitively through simple 'gazing' or 'touching.' As Evagrius put it, the mind is to become 'naked,' passing beyond multiplicity to unity." (Ware, 399) This "gazing" beyond words, is similar to what "Brother" Lawrence of the seventeenth century advocated. Evagrius also taught, "Prayer means the shedding of thoughts.... Blessed is the intellect that has acquired complete freedom from sensations during prayer." (Ware, 399)

Speaking of the unbiblical practice of visualizing Jesus, Cassian said we can see "Him," '...with the internal gaze of the mind, as glorified and coming in the glory of his majesty...' McGinn used terms to describe Cassian's methods which are similar to those of other mystics, such as "absorbed," "withdraw into solitude," etc. "In order to reach such a vision... we must withdraw into solitude.... Thus, the goal of prayer is to be absorbed into the loving union that binds the persons of the Trinity...." (McGinn, 1997; 222)

McGinn also speaks of Cassian's reference to Antony. "Antony of the desert is also cited, especially his statement "that prayer is not perfect in which the monk is conscious of himself or the fact that he is praying." (McGinn, 1997; 224) This kind of zoned out praying is not relational as prayer should be. It's "anti-prayer"-- a substitute for the real thing. Cassian speaks of prayer which is not vocal prayer, but very much along mystical lines. "[This prayer] is not concerned with any consideration of an image, nor characterized by any sound nor set of words.... Freed from all sensations and visible concerns, the mind pours itself out to God with unspeakable groans and sighs." (McGinn, 1997; 224)

McGinn cites Cassian, saying, "...the hermit's goal is 'to have a mind emptied of all earthly things' (as far as human weakness allows) and thus to be united to Christ." (McGinn, 1997; 225) This is very much in contrast to what the Bible says. If we want to draw close to Christ we

need to read and think on the words of the Bible, which is God's Word, and pray intelligibly.

The "Jesus" Prayer

Ware writes concerning the "Jesus" Prayer saying, "Most commonly it [the "Jesus" Prayer] takes the form 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me'... its origins extend back at least to the fourth and fifth centuries... four constituent elements may be distinguished: (1) the invocation of the Holy Name 'Jesus'; (2) the appeal for God's mercy, accompanied by a sense of penitence or sorrow for sin; (3) the discipline of frequent or continual repetition; (4) the desire to attain nondiscursive or apophatic prayer." (Ware 403-404) Nondiscursive refers to getting beyond concepts or words, or having a "naked" mind, as Evagrius termed it.

David Kowalski defines apophatic theology as, "...theology through negation which asserts only what God is not." Kowalski goes on to describe this "apophatic" influence on the church. "Apophatic theology developed in the church in an effort to speak to or accommodate Platonism, Middle Platonism, and Neo-Platonism. In these developments of Platonism, 'God' seems to become increasingly abstract and less personal.... What describes who God is as a person is His attributes which must be spoken of in positive terms. Apophatics saw God as transcending the kinds of attributes posited of Him in Scripture, and thus preferred to speak only of what God is not-- leading to an increasing depersonalization of God.... Apophatic theology traveled through the heart of the early Alexandrian church which absorbed it from Neo-Platonism, and it found its classic expression in the mystical theology of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in the early sixth century." (www.apologeticsindex.org/3137-cataphatic-and-apophatic-theology)

Certainly this "Jesus" Prayer did remove the personal element from praying. Instead of a relationship based on communication, it became a formula for achieving an experience. Referring to the fourth aspect of the "Jesus" Prayer, listed above, Ware writes, "As for the fourth element, nondiscursive prayer and the 'shedding of thoughts,' this was taught in

fourth-century Egypt by Evagrius, although he was drawing here not upon the Coptic monks around him in the desert but rather upon Origen and the Cappadocians." (Ware, 405)

One of the Cappadocians was Gregory of Nyssa (AD ca. 330-395), whose prayer method Ware summarized in these words, "Our aim is to attain, beyond all words and concepts, a 'certain sense of presence'; 'the Bridegroom is present, but he is not seen.' This noniconic, nondiscursive consciousness of God's presence is often designated in Greek sources by the term *hesychia*, meaning tranquillity and inner stillness...." (Ware, 399-400) Again, seventeenth century "Brother" Lawrence's focus on God's "presence" apart from words, comes to mind.

Cassian, summarized by McGinn, also advocated, "...the constant repetition of a single short verse....which is encouraged in order to achieve the goal of ceaseless prayer." (McGinn, 1997; 223) In a related vein, Ware explains the "Jesus" Prayer in these words, "Although it is a prayer in words, the invocation of the Name is of such brevity and simplicity that it enables the seeker to reach out beyond language into the living silence of God." (Ware, 406)

Madame Guyon also used words for the sake of getting beyond words and in order to quiet the mind. "First, read a passage of Scripture. Once you sense the Lord's presence, the content of what you have read is no longer important. The Scripture has served its purpose; it has quieted your mind.... If your mind begins to wander, just turn your attention back again to the inward parts of your being." (Guyon, 9-10)

God is Approachable

Using repetitions, focusing on an impersonal, wordless, quiet presence is not at all the biblical concept of prayer. The great offense to the Greeks was that God became flesh. And yet, in becoming flesh, God revealed His love for us and His power. He maintained His holiness, and communicated with mankind on a level we could understand, using real words, showing us the way to have a relationship with God Almighty. Today also, when we pray, we should remember that God made Himself

accessible through Jesus Christ. Prayer is not a set of ritualistic exercises designed to get a spiritual "buzz." Jesus told us not to pray as the heathen do. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:15-16)

Simon the Stylite (ca. AD 388-459) and other Pillar Dwellers
"Syria was, however, after Egypt, the country in which early monasticism flourished the most." (Gruetzmacher, 463) Bill Randles cites an example from Syria. "One ridiculous example was a man called Simon Stylites. A Stylite is a pillar, from whence Simon got his name... [Simon] gained renown after climbing a pillar and staying on top of it for 37 years, through rain, snow, night, and day! A ladder was sent up for visitors and his disciples delivered food to him in a basket. And people thought he was spiritual! This is certainly not Christianity! True Christianity has never been about escaping the human body. Such a so-called 'holy life' is nothing more than a harsher form of self-absorption!" (Randles, 1996; 162)

A sixth century engraving shows Simon's pillar encircled by a giant snake, representing temptation from the devil. Syria's pillar "champion," battling the giant snake, and Egypt's desert "champions" apparently did not realize that the battle was already won by Jesus Christ-- if only they had put their faith in Jesus and not in themselves. "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Colossians 2:13-15)

The victory is won not by our own strength, but through Jesus' blood and the resulting testimony He has given us. "And they overcame him [the

devil] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Revelation 12:11)

Philip Schaff wrote of Simon that, "He accustomed himself to eat only once a week, on Sunday. During Lent he even went through the whole forty days without any food... when Theodoret visited him, he had solemnized six and twenty Lent seasons by total abstinence.... A spectator once counted in one day no less than twelve hundred and forty-four such genuflections of the saint before the Almighty, and then gave up counting. He wore a covering of the skins of beasts, and a chain about his neck." (Schaff, 1910; 181)

Others in Syria also ascended pillars, following Simon's example. Simeon the Younger (AD ca. 521- 597) is one of the more famous of these, who some writers say remained on his pillar for 68 years. In the Guinness Book of Records, Simeon the Younger is in fact the world record holder, but is credited with "only" 45 years on his pillar, located in Antioch, Syria. (Russell, 173) Speaking of the "pillar saints," Gruetzmacher says that, "This form of mortification is apparently connected with pagan Syrian prototypes." (Gruetzmacher, 463).

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (AD ca. 485-532)

Another man from Syria was the enigmatic figure Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who was very influential in Catholic mysticism, even though it was later proven that his works were not what they claimed to be (he was not the contemporary of Paul mentioned in Acts 17:34).

"...there would have been little or no Dionysian influence at all had not the corpus been mistakenly received as apostolic soon after its 'discovery' in the early sixth century." (Rorem, 144) "It was conclusively exposed only in 1895." (Rorem, 133)

"...the Dionysian leap into the silent cloud of unknowing, beyond all names, interpretations, concepts, and words, has had an illustrious history of influence among medieval mystics and other spiritual writers in the West.... The fourteenth-century *Cloud of Unknowing* took its title from the Dionysian interpretation of the biblical account of Moses on

Mount Sinai. This anonymous English author claimed the Areopagite's authority for his entire treatise... ["Meister"] Eckhart [AD ca. 1260-1327] used our author to confirm that God is beyond all concepts, that every description of God is ultimately incorrect, and that only negations and silence are finally appropriate." (Rorem, 148-149)

The following instructions given in *Cloud of Unknowing* show the like-minded, "beyond thought" mysticism of Dionysius. "Take just a little word, of one syllable rather than of two.... With this word you are to strike down every kind of thought under the cloud of forgetting." (Yungen, 33)

"According to no less an authority than Bonaventure [he is one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church], the spiritual sense of scripture contains three kinds of teaching: doctrinal, moral, and mystical (that is, relating to the union of God and the soul). 'The first is especially taught by Augustine, the second especially by Gregory. The third is taught by Dionysius.'" (McGinn, 1997; 158) On the other hand, "...Luther publicly attacked it [the "Dionysian" corpus of writings] claiming, 'Dionysius is most pernicious; he platonizes more than he Christianizes.'" (McGinn, 1997; 158)

David Kowalski writes, "In *The Divine Names* and in *the Mystical Theology*, Pseudo-Dionysius said God was 'beyond being,' 'beyond divinity,' and 'beyond goodness.' Thus, in place of the biblical description of God as a divine being who is good, we have nothing but an abstraction that cannot be spoken of intelligibly. In place of intelligent thought Pseudo-Dionysius taught mindless, contemplative prayer: 'And you dear Timothy, in the earnest exercise of mystical contemplation, abandon all sensation and all intellectual activities, all that is sensed and intelligible, all non-beings and all beings, thus you will unknowingly be elevated, as far as possible, to the unity of that beyond being and knowledge.... Now, however, that we are to enter the darkness beyond intellect, you will not find a brief discourse but a complete absence of discourse and intelligibility.'" (www.apologeticsindex.org/3137-cataphatic-and-apophatic-theology)

According to Pseudo-Dionysius, God's presence, "...plunges the true initiate unto the Darkness of Unknowing wherein he renounces all the apprehensions of his understanding... and being through the passive stillness of all his reasoning powers united by his highest faculty to Him that is wholly Unknowable, of whom thus by a rejection of all knowledge he possesses a knowledge that exceeds his understanding." (Rolt, 158) Pseudo-Dionysius also wrote, "But, as I have been accustomed to say many times before, we must contemplate things Divine, in a manner becoming God. For the mindless, and the insensible, we must attribute to God, by excess-- not by defect, just as we attribute the irrational to Him Who is above reason...." (Parker, 60)

Pseudo-Dionysius' instructions above allude to the three stages in the mystical path, which John of the Cross and others referred to, Ware writes, "In the writings attributed to Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (ca. 500), the three stages are purification, illumination, and union." (Ware, 401)

Pope Gregory I (AD 540-604)

McGinn wrote of Pope Gregory, who is also one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church, "While he does not possess the creativity of an Origen, the penetration of an Augustine, or the speculative profundity of a Dionysius, he ranks with these three in stature and influence in the history of western mysticism." (McGinn, 1994; 38)

The Eucharist

McGinn points out Gregory's teaching on the Eucharist as being a turning point in the doctrine of the Eucharist. "Here the pope's emphasis on the role of suffering in the Christian life meshes with an important transition in early medieval spirituality that began to emphasize the Eucharist as sacrifice more than as an act of thanksgiving.... According to Gregory, 'This Victim saves the soul from eternal destruction in a special way; it renews the death of the only-Begotten in a mystery.' Gregory is still far from the eucharistic mysticism of the later Middle Ages, but his stress on the Christian's special access to Christ the Victim

in the Mass, and the corresponding obligation to accept the role of suffering victim in a fallen world, adumbrates much that was to come." (McGinn, 1994; 54-55)

The sacrifice that Jesus made was done only once, "...we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest indeed standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, the which can never take away sins: but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Hebrews 10:10-12)

Tomb-like Silence

McGinn points out a couple of metaphors Gregory used to describe contemplation. "We can also note his [Gregory's] striking metaphors of contemplation not only as a sleep, as we have seen above, but as a tomb: 'Divine contemplation is a kind of sepulcher of the mind in which the soul is hidden.'" (McGinn, 1994; 63)

McGinn speaks of Gregory's stress on silence, which is a common theme among mystics. "...silence played a not insignificant role in Gregory's mysticism. For the pope it is not only a question of canceling the noises of the exterior world..., but it is also the necessity for an interior silence...." (McGinn, 1994; 67)

"Gregory concludes that 'in that silence of the heart, while we keep watch within through contemplation, we are as if asleep to all things that are without.'" (McGinn, 1994; 68)

Bede (ca. AD 673-735)

Bede is considered to be one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church. He finished writing his Ecclesiastical History of England in AD 731.

Roman Catholic Traditions of Men

In the year AD 601 it is recorded that, "Moreover, the same Pope Gregory... sent to him...all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the Church, to wit, sacred vessels and altar-

cloths... as likewise relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs...." (Sellar, 57)

In Bede's history, the tone is thoroughly Roman Catholic, with emphasis on salvation by works, exalting Peter and Mary, doing penance, seeking out relics, and using the sacraments as "keys" to heaven. Particularly the Eucharist and Baptism are seen in this way. King Caedwalla, of the West Saxons, "...went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being cleansed in the baptismal font at the threshold of the blessed Apostles, for he had learned that in Baptism alone the entrance into the heavenly life is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that being made clean by Baptism, he should soon be freed from the bonds of the flesh and pass to the eternal joys of Heaven...." (Sellar, 205)

The Eucharist in Bede's work is also called, "the Oblation of the saving Sacrifice." And, the Eucharist is used in connection with praying for the dead. "...to make an offering to God of the Sacrifice of the holy Oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who had departed this world...." (Sellar, 181) "So he carried it to his monastery, and buried it honourably, and took care often to say Masses for the absolution of his soul...." (Sellar, 180) "...daily offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim...." (Sellar, 210) Not only are we not supposed to pray for dead people (we cannot add to or take away from what a deceased person did and believed during their life), but also Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was done ONCE for all time. No priest has authority to sacrifice Him again and such a ritual does not carry any power with it to get a person into heaven. Our faith is in Jesus, not in rituals. Communion is done in remembrance, not for merit points.

Bishop Wilfrid reported a "dread vision" in which supposedly Michael the archangel told him, "I am sent to call you back from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary, of perpetual virginity...." (Sellar, 230) Here, not only is Mary given the unbiblical role of being an intercessor for people, but is also unbiblically

said to be a "perpetual" virgin, even though the Bible makes it clear that Mary had children after Jesus (Mark 6:3).

Also in Bede's history, mention is made of necromancy, speaking with the dead, a practice forbidden by laws God gave to Moses. "...a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, telling her that at the break of day she should depart to the eternal light."

(Sellar, 160) In this forbidden practice, in a different case, the woman was also seeking favor from this "spirit" instead of looking for mercy from Jesus. "...she spoke to her as if she had been living, and entreated her that she would obtain of the mercy of our pitiful Creator." (Sellar, 161)

Silent Contemplation

Not much detail is given concerning the methods of spirituality in Bede's work, but there are some clues. "...Bishop Aidan was dwelling in the Isle of Fame, which is about two miles from the city; for thither he was wont often to retire to pray in solitude and silence...." (Sellar, 119)

"...observing monastic discipline...." (Sellar, 123) "...resolved to end his life as a hermit. He had another brother called Ultan, who, after a long monastic probation, had also adopted the life of an anchorite." (Sellar, 125) Anchorites were people who withdrew from the world and confined themselves to one location where they would lead an ascetic lifestyle. "...Cuthbert, as he grew in goodness and intensity of devotion, attained also to a hermit's life of contemplation in silence and solitude...." (Sellar, 193)

Warring After the Flesh

Bede also spoke of Fursa, who died AD ca. 633, receiving a physical mark from a spiritual encounter. "...throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in the spirit...."

(Sellar, 125) This is similar to the physical attacks by spiritual beings on Antony of Egypt, Francis of Assisi, and Teresa of Avila.

Corpse Prayers

Fursa's body also was said to not experience corruption when he died, and a shrine was made for it. Several cases of non-decayed corpses are listed in Bede's history. A similar thing has happened with the bodies of some Buddhist monks in Thailand, who died. People come to pray at these shrines, as they did at the Catholic ones to seek special miracles, favors, etc., from the "holy" relics. One example of this can be seen in the case the corpse of monk Cuthbert, a monk from Northumbria in the Northeast of England. Bede recorded that another monk came to pray there. "There prostrating himself before the body of the man of God [Cuthbert], he prayed with pious earnestness, that, through his intercession, the Lord might be propitious to him." (Sellar, 199)

Why do they seek the dead on behalf of the living? We who believe in Jesus Christ have a living God who is sufficient for all of our needs. Putting faith in the relics of the dead and seeking familiar spirits are the practices of witchcraft. "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin." (Isaiah 30:1)

Purgatory in Catholicism and Buddhism

In Bede's writings, the concept of purgatory is also revealed. A man named Drythelm was said by Bede to have a vision, wherein he saw people suffering in purgatory. "That valley which you beheld terrible with flaming fire and freezing cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished... but many are succoured before the day of judgment, by the prayers of the living and their alms and fasting, and more especially by the celebration of Masses." (Sellar, 216) This concept of purgatory is not a biblical one, but does have correspondence with Buddhism. In Buddhism, there is a belief in re-births and also in purgatory-like hells. In Buddhist cosmology there are said to be 31 realms of existence, including various heavens, hells, the earth, etc. All 31 of these however, are said to be impermanent, the duration of which is supposed to depend on one's karma. The belief in re-birth and the belief in purgatory both cater to a sense of procrastination.

If a student knows he will have a test this coming Friday, but if he also knows there will be a second chance for testing again if his score is not good, he will tend to procrastinate, rather than studying hard for only one chance at the test. Biblically speaking, there is only one chance. "...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27)

When a person is deceived into thinking that there are many chances and many "lives," or a second chance to "atone" in purgatory, it lessens the urgency to get right with God right now. Procrastination leads to failure instead of to success. These Catholic and Buddhist beliefs take people far away from God by giving them a false sense of comfort, rather than a sense of urgency and valuing the one life that they've been given.

Chapter 3

Chart #1- Logic Expelled and Minds Deserted

This brings to an end the overview of mystical influences on the Catholic church during these early centuries. The following is a table summarizing the anti-logical stance that is common to the spiritualities of Catholicism, Buddhism, Taoism, and the Star Wars series (although Star Wars is not a religion, it presents religious ideas which influence people towards a mystical worldview).

"Emptying" the mind...	Downplaying rationality and logic...
...in key figures influential in Catholic Spirituality	
"As Evagrius put it, <u>the mind is to become 'naked,'</u> passing beyond multiplicity to unity." (Ware, 399) Evagrius also taught, "<u>Prayer means the shedding of thoughts....</u> Blessed is the intellect that has acquired <u>complete freedom from sensations</u> during prayer." (Ware, 399) "...silence played a not insignificant role in [Pope] Gregory's mysticism. For the pope it is not only a question of canceling the noises of the exterior world..., but it is also the necessity for an <u>interior silence....</u>" (McGinn, 1994; 67) Roger of Provence (d. AD 1287) wrote, "Therefore, enter into your inmost self, within your own silence, so that you may go from your silence to God's and his	McGinn speaks of Cassian's reference to Antony. "Antony of the desert is also cited, especially his statement "<u>that prayer is not perfect in which the monk is conscious of himself or the fact that he is praying.</u>" (McGinn, 1997; 224) Gregory of Nyssa (AD ca. 330-395), whose prayer method Kallistos Ware summarized in these words, "<u>Our aim is to attain, beyond all words and concepts, a 'certain sense of presence'....</u> This noniconic, nondiscursive consciousness of God's presence is often designated in Greek sources by the term hesychia, meaning tranquility and <u>inner stillness....</u>" (Ware, 399-400) "As for the fourth element, <u>nondiscursive prayer and the</u>

silence beyond thought may speak this to you." (McGinn, 133)

Teresa of Avila wrote, "In the prayer of union the soul is asleep.... being unable to think on any subject, even if it wished. No effort is needed here to suspend the thoughts.... This is a delicious death..." (Teresa, A. 1921; 71-72)

John of the Cross wrote, "...being purged in this respect, they may be illumined with respect to the supernatural. For the spiritual and the sensual desires are put to sleep and mortified.... the imagination is bound and can make no useful reflection; the memory is gone; the understanding is in darkness, unable to understand anything..." (Peers, 102)

"In [Richard] Foster's book, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, Foster encourages readers to 'bind the mind' with 'breath prayers,' quoting Theophane the Recluse and making reference to Brother Lawrence, calling him a practitioner of this type of prayer." (Yungen, 149) A "breath prayer" does not necessarily mean focusing on the

'shedding of thoughts,' this was taught in fourth-century Egypt by Evagrius, although he was drawing here not upon the Coptic monks around him in the desert but rather upon Origen and the Cappadocians." (Ware, 405)

Pseudo-Dionysius wrote, "For the mindless, and the insensible, we must attribute to God, by excess-- not by defect, just as we attribute the irrational to Him Who is above reason...." (Parker, 60)

"...the logic of Bonaventure's map views what Bernard of Clairvaux and others had seen as the height of the mystical path, that is, attaining the status of the Bride.... where the mind transcends itself.... In these modes of contemplation the mind has passed beyond the world of rational logic to a form of Neoplatonic dialectical thought..." (McGinn, 1998; 108)

Bonaventure wrote, "In this passing beyond, if it is perfect, it is necessary that all intellectual operations be left behind...." (McGinn, 1998; 110)

Madame Guyon wrote, "...let your soul linger sweetly and

breath, but a word or phrase that can be repeated in one breath. Francis of Assisi also practiced this. "...he [Francis] remained on his knees <u>all night, repeating</u> with great love and fervour the words, "My God! my God!" and none others." (Ugolino, 9) "...[Francis] was insensible of all that passed around.... coming to himself as if just returned from the other world.... had been unconscious of all things earthly.... And the like befell him many different times..." (Ugolino, 107) Madame Guyon wrote, "Now that your soul has been called to a state of <u>inward silence</u>, you should not burden yourself with vocal prayers." (Chadwick, 93) "When your mind has wandered, don't try to deal with it by changing what you are thinking.... Instead, <u>withdraw from your mind!</u>" (Guyon, 12)	silently on the Scripture verse you have read. <u>Do not try to reason</u> out the truth in it..." (Chadwick, 17) "We must, therefore, continue steadfastly and immovable in our abandonment, <u>without listening to the voice of natural reason.</u>" (Chadwick, 36) "Let us say you reach this state of abandonment. Once you have reached this state, you must continue steadfast and immovable.... <u>Be careful; do not listen to the voice of your natural reasoning.</u>" (Guyon, 33) Guyon wrote, "May I hasten to say that the kind of prayer I am speaking of is not a prayer that comes from your mind. It is a prayer that begins in the heart.... Prayer that comes out of the heart is <u>not interrupted by thinking.</u>" (Guyon, 4)
...in Buddhist Spirituality	
In describing the four altered states of consciousness most common in Buddhism (Sanskrit-dhyana), Griffiths says these are, "...aimed initially at withdrawing the practitioner's senses and thoughts from interaction with the external world and finally at	"Zen, he [Dogen Kigen (1200-53)] says, is essentially '<u>dethinking thinking.</u>' With what means is dethinking to be thought? '<u>Beyond thinking.</u>'" (Robinson, 251) "It is even possible to see strong parallels between his [Dogen's] thought and that of early

bringing all mental activity to a halt." (Griffiths, 36-37)

Speaking of Buddhist meditation, Saunders writes, "Samadhi is a condition of profound concentration, of absorption.... It is a state of psychic oneness brought about by the suppression of all intellectual activity." (Saunders, 67)

"...All of this can culminate in what is known as the trance of cessation (nirodha), a state in which all mental and most bodily functions are suspended. The meditator in such a state does not have thoughts, feelings, or sensory awareness of either the outside or the inside world." (Strong, 1995; 124-125)

Ajahn Chah of Thailand, who was a Theravada Buddhist, had this to say about getting to the "real mind" (citta), "Firstly we follow this wandering mind. Follow it until we see it as uncertain and changing. The mind must clearly perceive itself, seeing that it has nothing that can be grasped. Then it will let go completely. The mind lets go of this very mind. By

Buddhism: Dethinking thinking corresponds to the use of right view to go beyond views... " (Robinson, 252)

Referring to the second trance (jhana in Pali; dhyana in Sanskrit), Thomas says, "...with the ceasing of reasoning and investigation, in a state of internal serenity with his mind fixed on one point, he attains and abides in the second trance..." (Thomas, 181)

Regarding a proper attitude during Buddhist meditation, Rahula wrote, "Here is no attitude of criticizing or judging, or discriminating between right and wrong, or good and bad. It is simply observing, watching, examining. You are not a judge, but a scientist." (Rahula, 73)

"In this fourth and culminating altered state, then, affect has been reduced almost to nothing, and the analytical and classificatory activities of the mind have also been reduced to zero." (Griffiths, 40)

"...reasoning is futile. Zen holds that nobody can actually think himself into a state of enlightenment, still less depend on

<u>completely understanding this mind it abandons this mind. It exhausts the mind's ability to concoct thought..."</u> (www.dhammatalks.net)	the logical arguments of others. <u>Rationality must eventually give way to intuitive insight</u>, which alone frees a person to live naturally and spontaneously...." (Mason & Caiger, 169)
...in Taoist Spirituality	
"...the Quiet of the Taoists produces a secondary 'virtue' (te) a power 'that could shift Heaven and Earth'.... For <u>'to a mind that is 'still'</u> the whole universe surrenders.'" (Waley, 58) A student said to his Taoist teacher, "'You seem to be able to make your body for the time being like a log of wood, <u>your mind like dead embers</u>'.... 'You have put it very well,' said Ch'i; 'when you saw me just now my 'I' had lost its 'me.'"' (Waley, 116) "The Taoist term in question is tso-wang, <u>'sitting with blank mind'</u> and is defined as: Slackening limbs and frame, blotting out the senses of hearing and sight, getting clear of outward forms, <u>dismissing knowledge</u> and being absorbed into That which Pervades Everything." (Waley, 117)	"Taoism went much further. Not only are books the mere discarded husk or shell of wisdom, but <u>words themselves</u>, expressing as they do only such things as belong to the normal state of consciousness, <u>are irrelevant to the deeper experience of Tao, the 'wordless doctrine.'</u>" (Waley, 59) "Lao Tzu [founder of Taoism] believes that God must be <u>approached by ignorance, by the abandonment of reason</u>. In this he is not alone. Following the Neo-Platonist tradition, Nicholas of Cusa [15th century Catholic mystic] wrote: 'The place where Thou art found is girt round with the coincidence of contradictories...<u>the door whereof is guarded by the most proud spirit of Reason and unless he be vanquished, the way in will not be open.</u>'" (Welch, 70)

...in Star Wars Spirituality	
Obi-Wan Kenobi: "<u>Let go of your conscious self</u> and act on instinct...stretch out with your feelings" (Star Wars: A New Hope) Qui-Gon Jinn: "When you learn to <u>quiet your mind</u>, you'll hear them [midi-chlorians, which supposedly are a life form that are in all living cells] speaking to you." (Star Wars: The Phantom Menace)	Qui-Gon Jinn: "Feel. <u>Don't think</u>. Use your instincts." (Star Wars: The Phantom Menace) Luke: "How am I to know the good side from the bad?" Yoda: "You will know when you are calm, at peace, <u>passive.... clear your mind of questions</u>." (Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back)

(For more on the importance of logic, please see Appendix 1)

Chapter 4

Events in the East at This Time

In this chapter, we'll look at some of the events in nations influenced by Buddhism from the 5th century BC through the 9th century AD. When people adopt ideas which are not in agreement with God's Word sometimes there are immediate negative effects and at other times the negative effects are more difficult to see. All of these effects will be clearly seen on the day of judgment though, when God will judge people for having suppressed the truth of His Word, instead of yielding to His ways. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:6-9)

China: The Struggle Between Taoism and Buddhism

"...a story that began circulating in China during this period [2nd century AD] that claimed that the Buddha was actually the Taoist sage Lao-Tzu, who had gone west at one point in his career to teach the barbarians.... not until the thirteenth century were they able to establish once and for all that it was a fabrication." (Robinson, 173-174)

"...Buddhism taught a system of mind training that supplemented the techniques taught by the native shamanic Taoist tradition..." (Robinson, 171) In explaining the path to awakening in Buddhism, through meditation, Robinson in his historical introduction to Buddhism, summarizes, "The content of Awakening is thus two-thirds shamanism, ethically transformed, and one-third phenomenology..." (Robinson, 19) Robinson defines shamanism and phenomenology: "In the simplest terms, shamanism is the effort to gain knowledge or power from altered states of consciousness." (Robinson, 290) "[phenomenology is] a type

of analysis in which experience is a given, and one tries to understand it from within." (Robinson, 19)

In the 3rd century AD Chinese intellectuals were struggling to find a basis for morality and government that was in harmony with "the principles underlying nature." (Robinson, 171) The fall of the Han dynasty (206 BC- AD 220) triggered serious questions, such as, "Why had the dynasty failed even though it had been run in accordance with the I Ching, the traditional book of divination, and the Confucian classics?" (Robinson, 178)

Using similar terminology to that of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, attention was directed to, "...a concept from the Taoist texts: that the realm of differentiated and nameable phenomena, which they termed 'being,' came from a common principle that was undifferentiated and unnameable, which they termed 'nonbeing.' 'Nonbeing' was the essence of all phenomena, whereas 'being' was the function of 'nonbeing'.... this distinction between essence and function, and the strong sense that words were incapable of expressing underlying essences, were to play a large role in Chinese Buddhist thought." (Robinson, 179)

In accord with these ideas, the Ruler was supposed to "...attain a frame of mind in touch with the undifferentiated and unnamed. Thus attuned, he would be able to make spontaneous decisions...." (Robinson, 179) Based on this way of thinking, a group of Taoists reasoned that "...if the same principle underlay all beings and could be touched by a completely natural mind, everyone had the ability to touch it and the right to do whatever came spontaneously. These thinkers practiced what they taught and became known for flouting almost every social convention imaginable." (Robinson, 179)

Other Taoists reacted to this and posited that, "Good and evil for each being are thus relative to how well they follow their individual function. Only the Sage (Ruler) has the allotment to know the allotment of all beings under heaven, and to lie above their relative norms of good and evil.... This reformulation succeeded in closing the door on anarchy and

defending the status quo. However, it could not account for the source of the allotment of things and made the basic structure of the universe seem arbitrary and amoral." (Robinson, 180)

"Twice-in 446 and 574-edicts were issued for the total suppression of Buddhism, in response to complaints from government officials that the Sangha was growing too strong." (Robinson, 177)

"Another landmark in the Buddhist history of the T'ang was the reign of Empress Wu (circa 625-706). Beginning her life in court as a concubine of Emperor T'ai-tsung and continuing as the major wife of his son, Wu Chao skillfully maneuvered herself into a position of power before her husband's death by eliminating her rivals. Not content to rule as regent for her son, she declared herself emperor and established a new dynasty. Unable to gain support from Taoists or Confucians, she sought to solidify her precarious position as a woman ruler by claiming to be the incarnation of Maitreya [the expected "fifth" Buddha] and actively cultivating the support of the Sangha, who obliged her by reporting omens and 'discovering' texts that justified her rule.... [she] actively patronized the Ch'an and Hua-yen schools." (Robinson, 184)

"In Hua-yen Buddhism, "The universe already is the body and mind of the Buddha Mahavairocana." (Robinson, 193) This pantheistic way of thinking led Empress Wu to abandon morality. "According to her [Empress Wu's] reasoning, if the cosmos already was identical with the Buddha Mahavairocana, there was no way to say that things should be any better than they already were, and one was justified in acting in whatever way one liked. For her, the best thing to do in an infinitely repeating cosmos was to make love." (Robinson, 193)

"The debilitating An Lu-shan Rebellion (755-64), together with widespread famine, cut the population of the empire from 53 to 17 million." (Robinson, 185)

In the 9th century AD various doctrinal battles were taking place in the Ch'an school of Buddhism (from which Zen in Japan is derived).

"Realizing that elaborate doctrinal explanations could only deliver a meditator into the hands of his scholarly opponents, they developed a new teaching style that made heavy use of paradox, cryptic statements, shouts, and beatings to jolt their students out of the verbalizing mind-set that led to doctrinal controversies in the first place. Although these methods were borrowed from the methods of old Taoist sages, they were also bolstered by the teaching in the Vimalakirti-nirdesa Sutra concerning the inability of language to express nonduality [unity of opposites]." (Robinson, 202)

"...Wu-tsung (r.840-46) came to the throne. A rabid Taoist.... he determined to wipe Buddhism from the face of China.... from 842-845, he succeeded in destroying more than 4,600 temples and 40,000 shrines across the empire, and forcing 260,500 monks and nuns back to lay life." (Robinson, 185)

The anti-logical approach continued in the schools of Ch'an and Zen. In the Ch'an school, "Dialogues for this purpose were chosen for their ability to baffle the ordinary rational and verbal processes of the mind, using language for its ability not to inform, but to perform: to shake up the mind and point to the principle, the Buddha-nature, that could shine through only when the mind was in a spontaneous , non-verbal state." (Robinson, 203)

This Ch'an way of "thinking" is not so different from what the Catholic mystic Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite proposed, "...we know God; not from His own nature (for that is unknown, and surpasses all reason and mind), but, from the ordering of all existing things, as projected from Himself, and containing a sort of images and similitudes of His Divine exemplars, we ascend, as far as we have power.... And there is, further, the most Divine Knowledge of Almighty God, which is known, through not knowing (agnosia) during the union above mind; when the mind, having stood apart from all existing things, then having dismissed also itself, has been made one with the super-luminous rays, thence and there being illuminated by the unsearchable depth of wisdom." (Parker, 61)

"This new sect, called Ch'an in China and Zen in Japan, was like Taoism a 'wordless doctrine.' Like Taoism it discarded outward ceremonies, and like Taoism it startled the novice, loosened his sense of 'is' and 'isn't,' by conundrums and paradoxes. Thus Zen which has played so great a part in the spiritual life of China and Japan.... is psychologically if not doctrinally the heir of the 4th and 3rd century Chinese Quietism." (Waley, 120)

Japan: Importing Buddhism

"Buddhism was probably first brought to Japan by Korean immigrants.... The first recorded contact on the royal level, however, was in 552 [AD]." (Robinson, 243)

The founder of the Shingon school of Buddhism was Kukai (AD 774-835) who went to China to learn. "From Prajna [a Kashmirian monk], Kukai is said to have received sutras and a rosary with which he is frequently portrayed in Japanese representations of him." (Saunders, 154) Using prayer beads was a practice used in Hinduism hundreds of years before Christ. "Shingon posits a kind of pantheism in which the whole universe is a manifestation, an emanation, of the central solar divinity, Vairochana (J. Dainichi)." (Saunders, 161)

"Zen holds that nobody can actually think himself into a state of enlightenment, still less depend on the logical arguments of others. Rationality must eventually give way to intuitive insight, which alone frees a person to live naturally and spontaneously...." (Mason & Caiger, 169)

India: Sakyamuni Buddha (ca. 490-410 BC)

The dates given for the Buddha's life are all over the calendar, but we do have some clues. "In the Asokavadana [written in the 2nd century AD], Asoka is said to have been born one hundred years after the parinirvana of the Buddha; in the Mahavamsa [written in the 5th century AD], however, he is said to have been consecrated king 218 years after the parinirvana." (Strong, 1989; 21). The dates for King Asoka are more certain, but still not absolute. Asoka's

coronation is estimated to have taken place between 273-264 BC. Using a middle date of 268 BC for Asoka's coronation, and adding 218 years according to the Mahavamsa, gives a date of 486 BC for the Buddha's death ("parinirvana").

Using the Asokavadana, and adding 100 years to the date of Asoka's birth (ca. 304 BC), gives a date of 404 BC for the Buddha's death ("parinirvana"). The Thai calendar gives a date of 543 BC for the Buddha's death. Most scholars are agreed that the Buddha lived for 80 years. In Damien Keown's 2013 book "Buddhism: A very short introduction," the date of 410 BC is given for the death of the Buddha.

India: Breathing Techniques

"The oldest known and most comprehensive of these breathing disciplines is that of Hindu yoga, from which the disciplines of Jainism and Buddhism are derived.... In general, yoga has as its goal the steady control of the senses and mind, leading to the abolition of normal consciousness.... Pranayama, the rhythmic control of the breath, is the fourth in the traditional eight states of yoga.... before pratyahara, withdrawal of the senses." (Findly, 304) "Respiratory disciplines is central in bringing about the unification of consciousness, the goal of yoga." (Findly, 306) "...Bhoja noted that through the suspension of sense activity, breath control could bring about single-pointed concentration (the fifth stage of yoga, pratyahara)." (Findly, 306)

"According to Tantric texts, the object of pranayama is to arouse kundalini, the divine cosmic force in the body, symbolized by a coiled and sleeping serpent that lies dormant in the lowest nerve center (cakra) at the base of the spinal column. Once aroused by pranayama [the rhythmic control of the breath], this energy rises up through the spinal column, piercing each cakra on its way until it reaches the head and there unites with the supreme soul." (Findly, 306)

"The [Buddhist] Pali canon.... enumerates sixteen ways in which mindful breathing can be practiced. The work begins with developing an

awareness of 'breathing in a long breath, breathing out a long breath....,' and continues through the practices until discursive thinking has been cut off and full concentration attained." (Findly, 306) This transcendence of "discursive thinking" was also the unbiblical goal of the "Jesus" Prayer.

"Respiratory techniques similar to those used in Hindu yoga can be found in the Christian tradition of hesychasm. Hesychasm is a type of prayer in Eastern Christianity based on a control of physical faculties and a concentration on the Jesus Prayer to achieve peace of soul and union with God.... The traditional breath control that begins hesychastic contemplation is used, like pranayama, to prepare for mental prayer.... In a quiet cell, with the door closed, one sits in the corner and presses the (bearded) chin against the upper part of the chest, much as in the jalandhara bandha of Hindu yoga. One then directs the eye-and with it all the mind-to the navel, and compresses the inspiration of air in the nose so that normal breathing does not come easily, all the while ceaselessly repeating the Jesus Prayer.... This exercise prepares one for the attainment of absolute quietude of the soul and for the experience of divine light." (Findly, 308)

India: Nagarjuna (2nd to 3rd centuries AD)

Nagarjuna, of India, founded the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism. He supposedly obtained some lost Buddhist texts from naga snakes. Part of his teaching, which is summarized here, is very similar to what other mystics promoted. "...emptiness is the true nature of the real, which cannot be grasped in our words or concepts but only in a meditation that leaves thought behind." (The Staff, xxii)

Ceylon (Sri Lanka): Roots of a Modern Conflict

When the Mahavamsa of Ceylon (5th century AD text) relates how Buddhist Prince Dutthagamani overthrew the non-Buddhist Tamil government, in 101 BC, the Mahavamsa records how Dutthagamani killed one million Tamils, with monks accompanying the troops into battle. According to Dhammika, "Eight arahats assured him that he had made very little bad kamma [Pali language, meaning karma] because he had

only killed passim, i.e. animals; nonbelievers being no more than animals....by any standards Duttagamani's struggle would qualify as a religious war." (www.buddhistische-gesellschaft-berlin.de/downloads/brokenbuddhanew.pdf)

In Donald Swearer's book, written in 1995, he points out that this age old conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils of Sri Lanka is still unresolved, "His [Bandaranaike's] espousal of a Buddhist civic religion, however, contributed to a Sinhalese Buddhist chauvinism that exacerbated the communal conflict between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority populations on the island. In 1983 the conflict erupted into a still unresolved fratricidal conflict." (Swearer, 117-118)

Ceylon (Sri Lanka): Meditation Manual

Buddhaghosa of Ceylon, wrote a very thorough commentary on meditation in the 5th century AD, called the Visuddhimagga. This is a standard work for Theravada Buddhists. Winston King summarizes Buddhaghosa's commentary. "Jhana... signifies a state of trance in which all sensory input, aside from the subject of meditation, is totally excluded from awareness. At the higher jhanic levels the meditator is also incapable of speech or movement, and in the highest possible, attention is said to be without ordinary consciousness and to reach the trance of cessation.... In this eighth jhanic-type state of awareness the meditator has erased all awareness of subject-object distinctions and is one with his awareness.... The trance of cessation (nirodha-samapatti), the very highest meditative state.... In this state the meditator is without perception or feeling and appears to be dead; such a state can last for up to seven days." (King, 88)

Chapter 5

Manna or Egypt?

In the Bible, Egypt is spoken of as a type of worldliness. In the following verse, Jerusalem is referred to, but it is called "Sodom" and "Egypt" spiritually. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." (Revelation 11:8)

When the children of Israel were disobedient, they wanted to go back to Egypt. "To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt." (Acts 7:39) There was much worldly influence that came from Egypt. "Thus will I make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and thy whoredom brought from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more." (Ezekiel 23:27)

Even when Israel was living in Egypt legitimately, they were supposed to live there as "strangers" realizing that it was not their true homeland. This attitude should be true for Christians of any country. "...they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it." (Acts 13:17) "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Hebrews 11:13)

In the Old Testament Israel sometimes tried to put their trust in Egypt instead of in God. "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!" (Isaiah 31:1)

Whether a person physically lives in Egypt or not is not the point. Spiritually and in our hearts, we are not supposed to put our trust in powerful nations or apparently impressive philosophies. We are

supposed to seek God, trust in His promises, and obey His Word. When the children of Israel were discontent with the manna God gave them, they turned in their hearts back to Egypt instead. Manna is likened to God's Word. Some Christians are discontent with God's Word. Instead of obeying God's Word, they turn to mystical and worldly interpretations of prayer. "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live." (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Renovare's Recommendations

Renovare, which Richard Foster founded in 1988, promotes many mystical authors. One such Renovare book is titled "25 Books Every Christian Should Read." Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Phyllis Tickle, Richard Rohr (who is Roman Catholic), and others made the selections of which 25 books should be included. Included in the list, among others, are "The Sayings of the Desert Fathers," "The Rule of St. Benedict," "The Cloud of Unknowing," Teresa of Avila's "The Interior Castle," John of the Cross' "Dark Night of the Soul," Lawrence's "The Practice of the Presence of God," Thomas Merton's "The Seven Story Mountain," and Henri Nouwen's "The Return of the Prodigal Son." (www.renovare.org/files/25books/25Books.pdf)

The books listed here and their authors all have serious unbiblical errors. The words of Jesus about "heaven" could well apply to these reckless recommendations to read about "the traditions of men," instead of following God's Word. "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (Matthew 16:6) "Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." (Matthew 16:12) A denial of the truth leads to mysticism.

Part II:

The Middle Years

"For, about the year [AD] 1000, as well as many years before and after but particularly then, the world lay sunken, as it were, in an arctic, six month's night, through the thick, and palpable darkness, which had arisen, with heavy vapors of superstitions, from the Roman pit. Yet, notwithstanding the state of the times, some undefiled persons, as bright heavenly signs, and stars, began to shine forth the more, and to let their light of evangelical truth illumine the dark nights of papal error. Yea, some, like the polar star, served as a sign to sail by; I mean, to accomplish safely and in a godly manner, through the turbulent waves of perverted worship and human inventions, the journey to the heavenly fatherland."

- Thieleman J. Van Braght (Van Braght, 264)

Chapter 6

The Franciscans and Other Monastics

Every Christian knows that prayer is an important part of the Christian walk. But, not all Christians have experienced a fulfilling prayer life. Whether it be a lack of time, a wandering mind, or other obstacles, many Christians are sustained on just the "minimum" amount of prayer. Addressing this need, but not in a biblical way, are the Catholic mystics now promoted by the emergent church and others even within "Bible-believing" churches. Counterfeit spirituality is not a new thing. Jesus said, "...the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth..." (John 4:23). Anything that offers something "exciting" and "innovative," at the expense of truth is not something that leads to being a "true worshipper."

Francis of Assisi (AD 1181- 1226)

Francis was born during the time of the crusades, which were mainly from about AD 1095-1291. He had some involvement in the military as a young man, but later was opposed to war. When he was in his twenties he became serious about doing penance and even abandoned his worldly goods, starting his own monastic order.

"It was probably in 1209 that Francis took his *fratres de paenitentia* with him to Rome, where...they did get to meet with Innocent III. They received the pope's verbal approval for the brief rule of life...as well as the 'license to preach everywhere.'" (McGinn, 46) Clare who led the female order of Franciscans, also needed to have their rule of life approved by the pope. "...about 1215, she induced Francis to give the 'poor ladies' ...a 'form of life' (*forma vitae*)...The document was approved by Innocent III in a special 'Privilege of Poverty.'" (McGinn, 48)

The false doctrine of personal espousal to Christ (and the Holy Spirit) was taught by Francis. Clare, in writing to a daughter of the king of Bohemia, said, "...embrace the poor Christ. Look upon him....Your spouse.... O most noble Queen, gaze upon him..." (Hellmann, 37)

Biblically, the church as a whole is the bride of Christ, not any individual. Also, the marriage supper of the Lamb is a future event.

Clare also received approval for a later Rule, in which Francis spoke of their espousal to the Holy Spirit: "...you have espoused yourselves to the Holy Spirit by choosing to live according to the perfection of the Holy Gospel..." (McGinn, 48) "Although Francis's *forma vitae* had identified the poor ladies as spouses of the Holy Spirit...Clare herself always speaks of Christ as the Bridegroom." (McGinn, 67) Either way, this is a false doctrine.

Innocent III was pope from AD 1198-1216. A more suitable name for this pope would have been Guilty III. This man had no problem approving the initial "rules" for both Francis' and Clare's Franciscan orders, but was a great persecutor of Bible believing Christians. Innocent III also blasphemously applied the title of bridegroom to himself, saying, "And am I not the bridegroom.... Yea, I am the bridegroom; for I have the...Roman church for my bride..." (Van Braght, 299)

Henry Halley in his Bible Handbook writes of Innocent III: "Forbade the Reading of the Bible in vernacular. Ordered the Extermination of Heretics. Instituted the Inquisition. Ordered the Massacre of the Albigenses. More Blood was Shed under his direction, and that of his immediate successors, than in any other period of Church History, except in the Papacy's effort to Crush the Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries." (Halley, 776)

The age of the crusades in which Francis lived was an age in which the Catholic church forced people into submission at the tip of the sword, and killed those who refused to submit. About 12 years before Francis was born, this was evident in the conquering of Ireland: "In 1169, Pope Adrian issued a papal bull granting the entire nation of Ireland to Henry II, the Norman king of England. At the Pope's behest, several of Henry's warlords invaded Ireland." (Bercot, 172) Patrick (ca. AD 387- 460), the great missionary to Ireland was a Bible believing Christian, not a

Catholic, and would also not have been in agreement with Francis' doctrines.

Francis in his Later Rule, wrote concerning the monks in his order "...let them go begging for alms with full trust." (Hellmann, 32). In contrast to this were the Waldenses among whom Peter Waldo was a main leader. Peter Waldo tried to work within the Catholic system at first, but found that the more he tried to follow the Bible, the more the Catholic priests opposed him. Waldo also gave away most if not all of his possessions (around AD 1160), but the Waldenses were opposed to begging: "They suffer no beggars among them, but help and assist each other as brethren." (Van Braght, 278) Van Braght has shown in the Martyr's Mirror that the beliefs of the Waldenses and the Albigenses, in spite of some false accusations against them, were very biblical and also very similar to the Anabaptists.

At about the same time the Franciscans emerged, another new order came onto the scene, the Dominicans, founded in 1216 by Dominic Guzman (ca. AD 1170- 1221). "...Dominic retained a devotion to poverty that was almost as extreme as that of Francis.... The whole order was thereafter to be funded exclusively by begging." (Tugwell, 19) This emphasis on begging was changed later.

The Dominicans focused mainly on preaching and were also used by popes in inquisitions. "The Order of Preachers grew out of the preaching campaign against the heretics in the south of France, in which Dominic, with his bishop, Diego, became involved in 1206. Diego realized that the heretics, whether Albigensian or Waldensian, were winning converts largely because they appeared much more obviously evangelical in their way of life..." (Tugwell, 18-19) This preaching done by the Dominicans was according to the Catholic traditions of men, which Francis also adhered to.

Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225- 1274) was a Dominican monk and later was declared to be one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church.

Transubstantiation, the doctrine that Christ's literal flesh and blood are

offered in the mass, is a concept that was present in the Catholic church long before Aquinas, but he helped to entrench this teaching with a philosophical defense of it, based on the pagan philosophy of Aristotle. The word transubstantiation was also in the profession of faith at the Fourth Lateran Council dominated by Innocent III in AD 1215.

Francis' view of the Eucharist was also that of transubstantiation: "See, daily he [Christ] humbles himself...daily he comes down from the bosom of the Father upon the altar in the hands of the priest...as we see bread and wine with our bodily eyes, we too are to see and firmly believe them to be his most holy body and blood living and true." (Hellmann, 35) Jesus made it clear that the flesh profits nothing and that he spoke spiritually when speaking of eating His flesh and blood: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63)

This sacrifice of Jesus was once only, not many times as represented in the Catholic mass: "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Hebrews 9:25-26)

Francis also believed in another way to salvation than that which is in the New Testament: "And let all of us firmly realize that no one can be saved except through the holy words and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which the clergy pronounce, proclaim and minister. And they alone must administer them, and not others." (Hellmann, 35)

"...1224, two years before his death, he received the stigmata marking his body with the five wounds of Christ crucified. This is attested by all thirteenth-century sources, and it is described as occurring at the appearance of a six-winged seraph." (Hellmann, 36) Not only did Francis promote "another gospel," through the Eucharist and loyalty to the Catholic priests, but he also later was represented as "another Savior," because of these stigmata, as we will see.

Bonaventure (AD 1217-1274)

Bonaventure took up leadership of the Franciscan order for many years. He was not the first leader of the order after Francis' death, but probably the best known, and he was very prolific in putting into writing his ideas on Franciscan mysticism.

The Roman Catholic church recognizes thousands of "saints" who they deem to be meritorious of the title. There is another title they give out though, to honor those who faithfully teach and promote the causes of Rome. This title is "doctor." As of 2014 Rome has recognized only 35 doctors. Many of these doctors, promoted mystical views of spirituality. Bonaventure is one of these 35 doctors. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_of_the_Church)

McGinn expounds on one of Bonaventure's writings: "...the logic of Bonaventure's map views what Bernard of Clairvaux and others had seen as the height of the mystical path, that is, attaining the status of the Bride, as the entry into the level of mystical theology proper, where the mind transcends itself...In these modes of contemplation the mind has passed beyond the world of rational logic to a form of Neoplatonic dialectical thought..." (McGinn, 108) This theme of transcending the mind is common among mystics. Bonaventure also writes, "In this passing beyond, if it is perfect, it is necessary that all intellectual operations be left behind...." (McGinn, 110) Being beyond logic, and leaving behind intellectual operation is a dangerous word of advice to give especially considering that the Bible tells us to love God with our mind, and to gird up the loins of our mind.

"...he [Bonaventure] then asks his reader to become each cherub in turn in order to contemplate the paradoxical coincidences..." (McGinn, 109) Changing one's state of mind and changing one's identity are common in both Catholic mysticism and Buddhism. The above passage, is reminiscent of Tibetan Buddhism where their deities are visualized in order to become them:

"The trainee...visualized the primary deity of his ritual and recited the deity's one hundred-syllable mantra one hundred thousand times...and finally, through prayer and yoga, made their empowerment enter into himself on hundred thousand times.... The assumption of the deity's identity, or 'pride,' was crucial in that one could not expect to control the deity's power unless one 'became' the deity." (Robinson, 293- 4)

In Martyr's Mirror, written in 1660, it is recorded, "A. D. 1259...Gerard Sagarellas, an Italian, but a doctor of Paris, wrote a book against the Franciscans, whereupon Bonaventura, General of the Franciscan order, replied..." (Van Braght, 302) More detail is not given about this book or the reply. It would have been interesting to see what was written against the Franciscans at that time. Gerard Sagarellas eventually paid for his faithfulness to Jesus Christ with his life. In identifying the inquisitors who were to turn people over to the secular authorities for punishment even unto death, Van Braght says, "The Dominicans and Franciscans, though they seemed to be very simple and modest, were nevertheless the principal actors [inquisitors] in this matter." (Van Braght, 317) There would have been many reasons to write a book against the Franciscans.

Results of Franciscan Spirituality Lived Out

Based on the writings on Joachim Fiore, (who died before Francis died) "An apocalyptic role was also found for Francis, who was identified with the angel of the sixth seal of Apocalypse 7:2, 'ascending from the rising of the sun and having the seal of the living God,' that is, the marks of the stigmata upon him." (McGinn, 73) The Catholic system lends itself well to the exaltation of a man. Saints are prayed to, the living are practically given the role of savior in praying for and paying for masses to be said for the dead, and the pope is said to be the vicar of Christ.

Various Franciscans have claimed to experience raptures and ecstasies in union with God. One of these is Roger of Provence who died in AD 1287. He once said, "See, O man, that the words you have heard are near to silence and so near that they cannot be heard outside silence, because they can only be heard where they are and because they are within silence. Therefore, enter into your inmost self, within your own

silence, so that you may go from your silence to God's and his silence beyond thought may speak this to you." (McGinn, 133) This almost sounds like a Zen koan- a statement of illogic designed to get a person beyond the "limitations" of rationality.

Two Franciscan women of note during this time were Margaret of Cortona (AD 1247-1297) and Angela of Foligno (ca. AD 1248- 1309). Continuing with Francis' theme of entering into the experience of the cross, it was recorded of Margaret that, "There they saw Margaret, not alongside the cross, but as if she were on the cross, tortured by severe sufferings.... In the terrible excess of suffering she ground her teeth, writhed like a worm or a twisted wreath, grew as pale as ash, lost her pulse and speech, grew totally cold. Her throat grew so hoarse she could hardly be understood when she came to her senses." (McGinn, 140-141)

Why did she have to come back to her senses? Biblically speaking we are not supposed to leave our senses in the first place! Whether it is the role of dying on the cross or the role of being the bride of Christ, both of these women took on roles which were not theirs to take, just as Francis was assigned the role of Savior from purgatory, and the role of being the angel of the sixth seal which are not his rightful roles.

Speaking of Angela, it was recorded that, "...the Spirit (in the manner of Francis) addressed her as bride: 'My daughter and sweet bride...I love you more than any other woman in the valley of Spoleto.'" (McGinn, 145) Angela also, "...encounters Francis in her ecstasies." (McGinn, 149) This was after Francis had died. "Angela's last days, as she lies on her deathbed 'absorbed more than usual in the abyss of divine infinity... has her cry out...again and again-'O Unknown Nothingness! O Unknown Nothingness!'" (McGinn, 151) What kind of a spirituality is this, which concludes with sort of a Buddhist "sunyata" for this "bride of the Spirit"?

There are some similarities between mystical pursuits and extreme Pentecostal experiences, such as the so called "Toronto Blessing." Bill Randles, points out the exaltation of experience over truth: "In the new

paradigm it is no longer truth that changes lives, it is sheer experience. 'Turn off your mind, don't pray, don't analyze, you wouldn't analyze a Kiss from your lover would you?' is how they put it up in Toronto" (Randles, 96). Many people in "conservative" churches would have outright rejected the extremes of Toronto, but welcome similar mind-numbing philosophies into the church under the guise of different terminology-- such as "contemplative prayer," or "breath prayers."

This "New Apostolic Reformation" instead of being a reformation to leave the false doctrines of Rome, is a reformation which promotes returning to Rome.

Some Summary Statements About Franciscan Spirituality

"...key elements of Franciscan mysticism...the significance of poverty and humility...the centrality of imaginative participation in the events of Christ's life, above all the passion; a strong Marian piety; belief in an imminent general age of contemplation..." (McGinn, 123)

"Among the many Catholic orders, Franciscans have proportionally reported higher ratios of stigmata and have claimed proportionally higher ratios of visions of Jesus and Mary." (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franciscan)

Franciscan Spirituality as Seen in "The Little Flowers" [According to McGinn, this version of Francis' biography is still the most widely read (42)]: "St Francis...got up and began to pray. Raising his hands and eyes to heaven, he exclaimed with great devotion and fervour, "My God! my God!" at the same time weeping bitterly; and thus he remained on his knees all night, repeating with great love and fervour the words, "My God! my God!" and none others." (Ugolino, 9)

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." (Matthew 6:7)

"About the beginning of the Order, and during the lifetime of St Francis, a young man...whose name was Simon...during these divine visitations

he was often rapt in God, and quite insensible to all bodily things." (Ugolino, 69)

"Brother James was once, in prayer, ravished in God, remaining for three days in ecstasy, quite insensible to all bodily feeling, so that the brethren thought him to be dead; and during this ecstasy many things with regard to the Order were revealed to him." (Ugolino, 80)

[Speaking of Brother John] "...ravished out of himself, and all corporal sensations being suspended, his body fell back... carried to the sacristy as if dead, for his body was quite cold...and in this state he remained till the third hour..." (Ugolino, 89)

[Speaking of Francis] "...he was sometimes so absorbed in God that he heard nothing, nor felt anything by his bodily senses." (Ugolino, 98)

"Thus, on the Feast of the Assumption, St Francis began the holy Lent, with great abstinence and austerity, macerating his body and invigorating his soul by fervent prayers, vigils, and disciplines; and thus increasing more and more, and going from virtue to virtue, he prepared his soul to receive divine mysteries and illuminations, and his body to sustain the cruel conflicts with the demons, who often attacked him sensibly." (Ugolino, 99)

[Speaking of Francis after he received the stigmata] "...was insensible of all that passed around, and knew nothing of all that was said or done, or even that he had passed by that castle or through the country... on the other side of the town, coming to himself as if just returned from the other world... had been unconscious of all things earthly...And the like befell him many different times..." (Ugolino, 107)

Another Jesus

"...in that contemplation, on that same morning he beheld a seraph descending from heaven with six fiery and resplendent wings; and this seraph with rapid flight drew nigh unto St Francis, so that he could plainly discern him, and perceive that he bore the image of one crucified.... He felt great joy at the gracious presence of Christ, who

appeared to him thus familiarly.... For upon his hands and feet began immediately to appear the figures of the nails, as he had seen them on the Body of Christ crucified, who had appeared to him in the likeness of a seraph..." (Ugolino, 103-104)

"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." (II Corinthians 11:4)

Exaltation of Man and Salvation by Human Works

"The true servant of Christ, St Francis, was in certain things like unto a second Christ given to the world for the salvation of souls." (Ugolino, 19)

"And this shall suffice concerning the fifth consideration of the glorious, holy, and sacred stigmata of our father St Francis, whose life may God give us grace to follow in this world, that by virtue of his glorious stigmata we may deserve to be saved with him in Paradise! To the praise of Jesus Christ and his poor servant St Francis! Amen." (Ugolino, 121)

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:20) "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Galatians 2:16)

"Brother Elias departed from this world, his soul being saved by the merits and prayers of St Francis, in which he had placed such great faith." (Ugolino, 66)

"...the most holy Apostles Peter and Paul appeared to St Francis in much splendour, and thus addressed him: 'As thy prayer and thy wish is to observe that which Christ and his holy Apostles observed, the Lord Jesus sends us to thee, to tell thee that thy prayer has been heard, and that it is granted to thee and to all thy followers to possess the treasure of holy

poverty. We tell thee also from him, that whosoever, after thy example, shall embrace this holy virtue, shall most certainly enjoy perfect happiness in heaven..." (Ugolino, 28)

Contrary to this vision of "Paul," the real Paul said..."But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8)

The Eucharist

[Speaking of Brother John] "...he saw before him Christ himself, with a multitude of angels, and he could not endure his Majesty. He saw that Christ would not enter the Host, nor would it be changed into the Body of Christ, unless he pronounced the other words of the Consecration, namely, Corpus meum... after a long time, it pleased God that Brother John should pronounce in a loud voice the words, enim Corpus meum; and immediately the form of bread was changed, and Jesus Christ, the blessed one, appeared in the Host, in his bodily shape, and in great glory..." (Ugolino, 88)

Communion With the Dead

[After Francis died] "... St Francis came to him, as he had promised with a great multitude of glorious saints, and conducted his soul to life eternal in the kingdom of the blessed." (Ugolino, 51)

"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..." (Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

[After Francis died] "Having said these words, St Francis and his companion immediately disappeared. Many brethren heard this related by the eight friars who witnessed the vision, and heard the words of St Francis." (Ugolino, 117)

Levitation

"At the third time he breathed on Brother Masseo, who, to his great surprise, was raised above the earth, and fell at some distance before the saint." (Ugolino, 27)

"Bentivoglio of Severino, was seen by Brother Masseo raised above the earth as he was praying in the forest.... Brother, Peter of Monticello, who was the guardian of the old Convent of Ancona, was raised several feet above the earth, to the foot of the crucifix before which he was in prayer." (Ugolino, 71)

"St Francis; and in reward of his purity he was permitted many times to behold him rapt in God and suspended above the earth, sometimes at the heights of three feet above the ground, sometimes four, sometimes raised as high as the top of the beach-trees, and sometimes exalted so high in the air, and surrounded with so dazzling a glory, that he could scarce endure to look upon him." (Ugolino, 97)

Mind-Reading

[Speaking of Francis] "...he was sometimes so absorbed in God, that he was seen by his companions to be raised corporally above the ground, and rapt in prayer; and in these raptures were revealed to St Francis not only things present and future, but even the secret thoughts and desires of the brethren..." (Ugolino, 96)

[Speaking of Francis as father] "...his saintly father had penetrated into his deepest thoughts..." (Ugolino, 43)

It is interesting to note that levitation and mind reading are also claimed for those who excel in Buddhist meditation: "The main aim of concentration meditation is to develop right concentration- concentration of the pure mind. As a result of this, we end up in deep states of concentration or absorption (jhanas). When these are further developed, they can give rise to supernormal powers- like levitation, mind reading, recollection of past lives, and so forth." (From the book "Essentials of Insight Meditation" www.buddhanet.net/pdf_file/essentials.pdf) These

ideas are also confirmed in the Samyutta Nikaya of the Pali Canon:
(www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn51/sn51.020.than.html)

Exaltation of Mary

"...the Queen of Heaven appeared...with her Blessed Son in her arms, and approaching Brother Conrad placed the Holy Child in his arms." (Ugolino, 72) Jesus is resurrected and exalted now. Why was He reduced in this vision to being a baby again, with Mary as the "Queen of Heaven?" This is a false exaltation of Mary, and a diminishing of Jesus.

Purgatory

"Then Brother Conrad, seeing that the soul of the young man was relieved by his prayers, said for his intention a hundred Paters; and when they were finished of soul said to him: "I thank thee, dearest Father, in the name of God, for thy great charity towards me; through thy prayers I have been delivered from the pains of purgatory, and am going to heaven," and with this the soul departed. (Ugolino, 73)

"In this seraphical apparition, Christ, who appeared under that form to St Francis, spoke to him certain high and secret things... so do I grant to thee that every year on the anniversary of thy death thou mayst go to Purgatory, and take with thee to the glory of Paradise all the souls of thy three Orders, the Friars Minor, the Sisters, and the Penitents, and likewise all others whom thou shalt find there, who have been especially devout to thee..." (Ugolino, 104)

In the previous quotation everything that II Corinthians 11:4 speaks against, is promoted: "another Jesus," giving "another gospel," and being devoted to a man, and a dead man at that ("another spirit").

Chapter 7

Chart #2- Similarities Between Buddhism and Catholicism

Buddhism	Catholicism
-Celibacy of monks -Special language for the clergy (Pali) -Prayer to dead saints -Salvation by works -Belief in purgatory -Begging alms -Special clothes for the clergy -Devotion to relics -Use of idols -Levitation and mind reading claimed for able meditators -the championing of Buddhist causes by the government -making merit for the dead -repetitious prayer with a rosary -pilgrimages to holy sites -the use of "holy" water	-Celibacy of the priesthood -Special language for the clergy (Latin) -Prayer to dead saints -Salvation by works -Belief in purgatory -Begging alms (at least for the early Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits) -Special clothes for the clergy -Devotion to relics -Use of idols -Levitation and mind reading claimed for able contemplators -the championing of Catholic causes by the government -saying masses for the dead -chanting with a rosary -pilgrimages to holy sites -the use of "holy" water

Should it be any wonder then, that the world's leading publisher of books on Buddhism (Shambhala Publications) also promotes Catholic Mystics (including Francis of Assisi) on their website?...

“The Christian mystics are the treasure of Western civilization-- yet they remain little known among those of us who are potentially their spiritual heirs. Andrew Harvey's anthology confronts us with the mystics in their own words, to show us how well they serve, even now, as guides for the spiritual life-- and to challenge our preconceived ideas about the path of Christianity. He has chosen selections that represent all eras of the

Christian tradition, as well as the amazing range of people who have embodied it, people like Francis of Assisi, Meister Eckhart, Julian of Norwich, Teresa of Avila, Thomas Merton, Bede Griffiths, and many others.” (www.shambhala.com/teachings-of-the-christian-mystics.html)

Chapter 8

Bernard the Mystic

Bernard of Clairvaux (AD 1090- 1153)

About 28 years before Francis of Assisi was born in Italy, the Frenchman Bernard of Clairvaux died. Bernard was the abbot of a Benedictine/Cistercian monastery well known for his mystical writings. He is also one of the 35 people deemed to be a doctor of the Catholic church. It probably should not come as a surprise then, that he was no friend of Bible believers.

In his book "Why Jesus?," Ravi Zacharias gives a mostly good apologetic for the truth, showing the bankruptcy of the new spiritualities of Oprah Winfrey and Deepak Chopra. It is unfortunate that at the end of his book he brings in a recommendation for "Christian mysticism":

"Indeed, great mystics fascinate me as well. I recommend the finest volume I have read that pulls together the best known Christian mystics: a book titled, "Water From a Deep Well," by Gerald L. Sittser. From Bernard of Clairvaux to John of the Cross, there is a goldmine here for thought, for reflection, for example, and for sensing God's near and dear presence." (Zacharias, CD 7, track 11)

In this point at least he has used one false spirituality to try to counter another false spirituality. That is like removing one poison only to replace it with another one. In calling the mystics "Christian mystics," he has marketed the "Catholic" part out of their name and also failed to disclose what kind of an "example" such people gave. This compromise was just one of many in the shipwrecked life of Ravi Zacharias.

Bernard of Clairvaux "for example" in addition to promoting the persecution of Bible believing Christians (more on this later), and teaching non-biblical mysticism, also was a major spokesman for the second Crusade, and held to doctrines which militate against faithfulness to God: the exaltation of Mary, the idolatry of the mass, etc.

Bernard, like many mystics takes a lot of his teachings from the Song of Solomon: "In the text the Bridegroom, who is embracing the Bride... forbids the daughters of Jerusalem to awaken her.... The abbot calls this 'ecstasy' (*exstasis*) a death, because it removes the soul from life's cares, enabling it 'to be snatched from itself by a holy and vehement thought (*cogitatio*)...so that it surpasses the common use and custom of thinking'...'The soul in ecstasy does not have the sensation of living (though it is alive), and so necessarily does not feel life's temptations.' The abbot goes on to state that 'this kind of ecstasy (*excessus*)...is called contemplation.'" (McGinn, 206) Here we have a definition of the word "contemplation" which is quite different from ordinary logical pondering.

"Like all classical Christian mystics, he gives the sensation of sight, or contemplative vision, an important role." (McGinn, 187) "But contemplation in the proper sense for Bernard, as for his patristic sources, was a rich term used to express a continuum of the experience of God's presence symbolized in visual form." (McGinn, 211)

In the ten commandments we are forbidden from making a graven image. This includes not only images of wood, stone, or gold, but also making an image in our minds. Visualization is not something that is promoted in the Bible. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Greg Boyd, a popular author in some "evangelical" circles, has written a book called "Seeing is Believing," in which he promotes visualization, also describing a visual interaction he had with "Jesus" and his dead grandmother. (cicministry.org/commentary/issue83.htm) Bob DeWaay also points out, "... Greg Boyd cites some of Foster's words here to support what he calls "cataphatic prayer" which uses the imagination and images as a means to contact God and gain spiritual information. Foster prescribes a practice using one's imagination that mimics astral projection to the degree that he actually includes a footnote disclaimer stating that it is not astral projection.... Boyd describes how he practices

this, as well as its results..." (www.worldviewweekend.com/worldview-times/article.php?articleid=6208)

"The frequent appearance of wine in the Song of Songs allowed Bernard to make considerable use of the notion of 'sober, or sacred drunkenness' ...an ancient description of the mystical experience first found in Philo and present in patristic writers." (McGinn, 212) These ideas seem like forerunners to the "drunk in the Spirit" manifestations at the "Toronto Blessing."

"Bernard, as we have noted, gave the angels a larger role in mystical experiences than most Latin mystics." (McGinn, 209) In speaking of "imaginative likenesses" Bernard writes, "I think these are formed in us by the suggestion of the holy angels, just as, on the other side, there is no doubt that contrary and evil imaginings are thrust in by the evil angels." (McGinn, 210)

Speaking of giving birth to spiritual understandings through meditation, Bernard writes, "In this last kind sometimes there is a passing beyond and departure...even from the corporeal senses so that she who perceives the Word does not perceive herself...the mind...is as it were stolen away from itself- indeed, rapt and snatched from itself- in order to enjoy the Word." (McGinn, 212)

A "departure..from the corporeal senses"? A "sacred drunkenness"? Not having the sensation of living? Promoting an experience comparable to sleep from which the Bridegroom did not want the Bride to be awakened? Surpassing the common use and custom of thinking? These are just alternate ways of saying "altered state of consciousness," which is not something the Bible promotes, but which is promoted by Shamanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.

Bernard supported the persecution of Bible believing Christians: "...about A. D. 1155 there were in the above part of France, certain simple but truthloving peasants, who, pointing to no other author of their doctrine or belief, than to the apostles, called themselves Apostolics...

Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, greatly inveighed against them in divers sermons, calling them a sort of despised, boorish rabble...Continuing, he [Bernard] shows in what their so called heresy consisted, saying: "They ridicule us, that we baptize infants; that we implore the intercession of the saints, and the like...but it is to be deplored, that not only secular princes, but also, it is said, some ecclesiastics, yea bishops, who ought much rather to have persecuted them, upheld them for lucre's sake, saying: 'Why should we condemn them as heretics, who have not been convinced of heresy, nor have confessed the same?' Thus far, Bernard, who was called, The Mellifluent, but who nevertheless poured forth nothing but bitter gall against these people... they contemned infant baptism, purgatory, praying for the dead, invocation of the saints, swearing of oaths, etc.; that they accepted no evidence save from the New Testament; and went joyfully unto death." (Van Braght, 293-294)

"But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." (Galatians 4:29)

Chapter 9

Events in the East at This Time

This chapter provides more glimpses into some religious events and concepts in the East during "the middle years" in parallel with the events and concepts that were evident in the West. Parallels between Buddhism and Catholicism abound here, but both of these went astray from God's Word, following instead the inventions of people. "For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens." (Psalm 96:5)

Purging of the Pali Canon in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

In Ceylon, the place where the Pali Canon was first written down (c. 70 BC), and where its commentaries were composed (c. AD 500), the texts went through a purging in the 12th century: "When Parakkamabahu I. (AD 1153- 1186) reformed Buddhism in Ceylon during the 12th century, the monks of the Abhayagiri- and the Jetavana-vihara were reordained according to the Mahavihara tradition. Con-sequently, their texts gradually disappeared, and the only Theravada texts surviving are those of one single monastery, the Mahavihara." (Hinuber, 22) "...consciously following King Asoka's example, King Parakramabahu forcibly united all the monks in Sri Lanka into the Mahavihara sect." (Robinson, 147)

The Thai Kingdom Emerges

Up until AD 1239 when the Sukhothai Kingdom was formed, Thailand was mostly under Khmer and Mon rule. The Khmer Empire held mainly to Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism at that time. The Sukhothai Kingdom came under the influence of Theravada Buddhism through Sri Lanka, via Ligor (modern day Nakhon Sithammarat in southern Thailand). Towards the end of the 13th century, the king of the Sukhothai Kingdom, Rama Kamhaeng invented the Thai alphabet, based on Mon and Khmer scripts.

Crusade-like Violence in Burma

About 150 years before this, and slightly before the crusades of the Catholics versus the Muslims, a Burmese king was setting Buddhism up

as the state religion through a crusade of his own: "...King Anawarhta (1044-77) the monarch who made Theravada the state religion of Burma. After his conversion by the monk Shin Arahan Anawarhta's first task was to acquire the Pali scriptures. The nearest copy was in the neighboring kingdom of Thaton which was invaded, its capital sacked and the scriptures triumphantly brought to Pagan on the backs of a train of elephants. The king of Thaton and his family lived out their remaining days as slaves in a monastery. To get relics to enshrine in the numerous stupas he was building Anawarhta then invaded Prome.... All Anawarhta's campaigns were opposed militarily and must have resulted in a great deal of bloodshed although no figures are given in the ancient records. The clerics who recorded these events were only interested in the number of monks Anawarhta fed and the number of monasteries he built, not in how many people he slaughtered." (www.buddhistische-gesellschaft-berlin.de/downloads/brokenbuddhanew.pdf)

The Mongol Empire and Tibet

In the north, Genghis Khan (ca. AD 1162- 1227) was busy building his Mongol Empire, which eventually under other rulers, included control over Tibet. In Tibet the first Dalai Lama had not appeared on the scene yet. Gendun Drup (AD 1391- 1474) is considered to be the first Dalai Lama, but was not called that in his lifetime. Buddhism first came to Tibet in about AD 650, but experienced a resurgence of interest, known as "the Second Propagation" from about the 11th to the 13th centuries. "Thus, by the end of the Second Propagation, there were four major schools of Buddhism in Tibet- Kadam, Sakya, Kagyu, and Nyingma..." (Robinson, 280) Of these four schools, the Kadam school ceased to exist towards the end of the 16th century, but in the 15th century, the Gelug school began, which is the school the Dalai Lamas belong to. Nowadays Tibetan Buddhism still has four primary schools.

Zen in Japan

"Buddhism was probably first brought to Japan by Korean immigrants...The first recorded contact on the royal level, however, was in 552." (Robinson, 243) "Myoan Eisai (1141-1215) established the first Zen (in Chinese, Ch'an) temple in Kyoto in 1202...Dissatisfaction

with the eclecticism of Eisai's Zen led a number of monks in the following generation to travel to China on their own to receive transmission of a less adulterated teaching to bring back to Japan. The first to do so was Dogen Kigen (1200-53)...Zen, he [Dogen] says, is essentially 'dethinking thinking.' With what means is dethinking to be thought? 'Beyond thinking.'" (Robinson, 251)

"It is even possible to see strong parallels between his [Dogen's] thought and that of early Buddhism: Dethinking thinking corresponds to the use of right view to go beyond views....Dogen became regarded as the founder of the Soto school of Zen." (Robinson, 252) The word Zen comes from the Pali word "jhana": "...the jhanas are states of deep mental unification which result from the centering of the mind upon a single object with such power of attention that a total immersion in the object takes place." (www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/gunaratana/wheel351.html) For attainment of the four jhanas, the Pali Canon recommends a monk to, "...attend carefully to this same concentration through mindfulness of in-&-out breathing." (www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn54/sn54.008.than.html)

The Lotus Sutra in Japan

At the same time Zen was developing in Japan, Nichiren (AD 1222-1282) formed another Buddhist sect: "Only the Lotus Sutra, Nichiren felt, contained the unadulterated True Dharma. All other Buddhist sects were wrong..." (Robinson, 256)

"Nichiren's life followed the pattern of a Shinto shaman more than that of a Buddhist leader. He attracted a following largely through his courage and...his personality, which at times resembled that of a medium possessed." (Robinson, 256) "...the practice he [Nichiren] recommended was simplicity itself: the repetition of the *daimoku* (mantra) 'Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō'...Later he worked out a mandala representing his beliefs, called the *gohonzon*, at which one was to stare while repeating one's declaration of homage." (Robinson, 256) Soka Gakkai Buddhism is an offshoot within Nichiren Buddhism. It began in 1930 and is based on Nichiren's teachings.

Nichiren's Influence Felt in Korea

False teacher David/Paul Yonggi Cho writes, "Through visualization and dreaming, you can incubate your future and hatch the results." (www.inplainsite.org/html/rick_warren_new_age.html#RW-Cho) "Cho claims that the Holy Spirit said to him, "Look at the Soka Gakkai. They belong to Satan... and with the evil fourth dimension they carry out dominion over their bodies and circumstances." Then God told him that Christians should link their fourth-dimensional spiritual power to God the Creator to have even greater control over circumstances than the Soka Gakkai." (lyndemdesigns.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=82)

From a Soka Gakkai website...“...all I knew was the absolute power of daimoku and the technique of mantra-powered visualization I had used in my own recovery, as revealed by SGI Vice President Takehisa Tsuji. That method of chanting and imagery placed the seven characters of Nam-myoho-rence-kyo over the body, perfectly corresponding to the ancient chakra schematics of Hindu and Tantric Buddhism.” (www.gakkaionline.net/Experiences/mailmantra.html)

"Results" are not proof for the Christian. True Christians worship the Father in spirit and in truth. If somebody can get results which are not according to truth, then these results are "lying wonders" (II Thessalonians 2: 9). Christians are to love the truth (II Thessalonians 2: 10) and rejoice in the truth (I Corinthians 13: 6). The first and the last items in the armor of God are truth (Ephesians 6: 14;17), and it is the truth which sets us free (John 8: 32). Jesus Christ is the truth (John 14: 6). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (John 15: 26). Are you valiant for the truth (Jeremiah 9:3)?

Chapter 10

Sheep in Wolves' Clothing?

A summary of some of the tendencies and teachings promoted by the Catholic mystics of the 12th and 13th centuries include: taking on roles and identities which didn't belong to them (personal espousal to Christ and the Holy Spirit, entering into the experience of the crucifixion, praying for the dead, becoming a cherub, recognizing Francis as a savior from purgatory, and the pope as the vicar of Christ, etc.), repetitious mantra-like praying, repeating the sacrifice of Jesus bodily in the Mass, exalting Mary beyond her biblical role, downplaying rational thought in order to emphasize experience, being detached from one's senses, encouraging visualization, preaching a gospel of works, persecuting true Bible believers, and relying on Catholic dogmas instead of the Bible.

Some people seem to think they can dabble in these "contemplative" pursuits just a little bit. But, look where this road leads. If a person doesn't want to go on a 500 mile trip to Babylon, why even go one mile? This is the broad way, not the narrow way which leads to life.

Popular authors like Dallas Willard, Richard Foster, Greg Boyd and others within "conservative" churches are pointing people towards the Catholic mystics: "AP [*Andy Peck:*] *Who has influenced your thinking outside of the Bible?* DW [Dallas Willard:] The people who have influenced me most are long dead: people such as in the catholic tradition, Thomas a Kempis, St Francis of Assisi, St Augustine..." (www.dwillard.org/articles/artview.asp?artID=92) Both Dallas Willard and Richard Foster recommend many books with mystical leanings on their websites: (www.dwillard.org/resources/RecReading.asp), (richardjfoster.com/books/) (for more on Richard Foster please see appendix 3)

As the so called conservative church is pointed towards the Catholic mystics, they in turn look towards eastern methods of spirituality,

drifting further and further from the Bible. The true Bible believers of the past left this false spirituality:

In the year AD 1317: "Now when the light of the Gospel began to break forth greatly from the doctrine of the Waldenses, which militated against the papal inventions, this also manifested itself in a monastery, among the Franciscan monks; so that particularly four of the order of the Minorites, their eyes being opened, separated from monachism, and at the same time from the superstitions of popery, desiring thenceforth to follow and serve Jesus Christ, their Saviour, not in a simulated, but in true poverty, with, in, or among the cross bearing church of God, called the Poor Men of Lyons, Brethren of the Poor Life, or Waldenses; who also opposed infant baptism, the swearing of oaths, revenge against enemies, and other articles of the Roman church.... In the meantime, it appears, the above four persons, refusing to depart from the truth which they had confessed and accepted, were condemned to death as heretics, and, having commended their souls to God, were burnt alive." (Van Braght, 331)

In this book we have seen some of the fruits of the lives of some popular Catholic mystics, which include presenting another gospel and misleading people from the way that leads to life. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits..." (Matthew 7: 15-16) Good fruit is related not only to deeds, but also to words and doctrines (Matthew 12: 33- 36).

In the above verse, the "ravening wolves" come in "sheep's clothing." But, in churches today, the real sheep are impressed by this "sheep's clothing," and ignore the danger of the ravening wolves. Even the shepherds often overlook this ravening influence. Once the wolf is accepted by the church, the wolf is at liberty to wound, kill, and shipwreck the faith of many ("Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof." Proverbs 18:21). Then, the strength of the church will be redirected either introspectively so that the church has no outward effect, or towards irrelevant projects

that won't bring any lasting fruit for the kingdom of God. False prophets invariably sap the strength of the church.

George Whitefield gave this still timely warning: "An almost Christian is one of the most hurtful creatures in the world; he is a wolf in sheep's clothing: he is one of those false prophets, our blessed Lord bids us beware of in his sermon on the mount, who would persuade men, that the way to heaven is broader than it really is; and thereby, as it was observed before, 'enter not into the kingdom of God themselves, and those that are entering in they hinder.' These, these are the men that turn the world into a luke-warm Laodicean spirit; that hang out false lights, and so shipwreck unthinking benighted souls in their voyage to the haven of eternity. These are they who are greater enemies to the cross of Christ, than infidels themselves: for of an unbeliever everyone will be aware; but an almost Christian, through his subtle hypocrisy, draws away many after him; and therefore must expect to receive the greater damnation. (Whitefield, 513)

Does a real sheep have any need for a "wig" of "wolves' clothing"? Does a real Christian have any need to learn from these non-biblical techniques, which are destructive heresies? The Bible is our pure standard. Those who try to add to the Bible through special techniques are like those who would try to add a negative 5 to a perfect ten, or those who would try to add poison to pure water. When adding "special doctrines" to the Bible, the value only decreases. Let us be valiant for the truth. A person who would like to compromise the truths of the Bible cannot say they love Jesus: "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (John 14:23)

There is still much ground to cover. In the next part of this book, we'll take a look at some influential Catholics from the 16th through 21st centuries, again comparing their teachings with eastern practices and the Bible.

Part III:

The Latter Years

"As for you, sailors, what shall I say? How shall I address myself to you? How shall I do that which I so much long to do; touch your hearts? Gratitude obliges me to wish thus well to you. For you have often taught me many instructive lessons, and reminded me to put up many prayers to God for you, that you might receive your spiritual sight. When I have seen you preparing for a storm, and reefing [could also be reeasing] your sails to guard against it; how have I wished that you and I were as careful to avoid that storm of God's wrath, which will certainly, without repentance, quickly overtake us? When I have observed you catch at ever fair gale, how I secretly cried, O that we were as careful to know the things that belong to our peace, before they are forever hid from our eyes! And when I have taken notice, how steadily you eyed your compass in order to steer aright, how have I wished, that we as steadily eyed the word of God, which alone can preserve us from "making shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience!" In short, there is scarce anything you do, which has not been a lesson of instruction to me; and, therefore, it would be ungrateful in me, did I not take this opportunity of exhorting you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be as wise in the things which concern your soul, as I have observed you to be in the affairs belonging to your ship." -George Whitefield (Whitefield, 86-87)

Chapter 11

Ignatius of Loyola

Many predators use camouflage to sneak up on unsuspecting prey. The Arctic Owl, in addition to being an extremely silent flier, has white feathers to blend in with its snowy surroundings. If it were a noisy flier with neon orange feathers, it would have a hard time sinking its talons into a potential meal. The doctrines of demons are often camouflaged as well, so as to hide the potential danger from their target audience. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (I Peter 5:8)

Many people in the church today, in an attempt to live the victorious Christian life, are turning to the Catholic mystics for guidance and revival. Who are these people, and in what direction do their lives point? In this part of the book, we will take a look at the lives and teachings of seven mystics, aka contemplatives of the past five centuries: Ignatius of Loyola (AD 1491-1556), Teresa of Avila (AD 1515-1582), John of the Cross (AD 1542-1591), "Brother" Lawrence (AD ca. 1614-1691), Madame Jeanne Guyon (AD 1648-1717), Thérèse of Lisieux (AD 1873-1897), and "Mother" Teresa of Calcutta (AD 1910-1997), as well as three recent popes, and a few events in Asia related to Buddhism. I hope to show that the teachings of these mystics (three from Spain, three from France, and one from Albania) are a departure from the teachings of the Bible, and actually have many similarities with Buddhist teachings. Paul told the Ephesians, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock... For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." (Acts 20:28-29)

If we want to have a revived prayer life, or a renewed zeal, we need to "take heed", not naively being impressed by the mystics. What the mystics have to offer is not real spiritual food for the sheep, but "spiritual sounding" experiences, which take people far from the God of the Bible.

Roger Oakland, in his book "Faith Undone" made this insightful comment. "Since mysticism is the very steam that drives the emerging church, to exclude it from critique is to side-step the real danger of this movement." (Oakland, 102-103) Nowadays it is not only emergent congregations that are in danger of this "steam-power" from mysticism. The influx of books and speakers promoting the mystics of old has shaped even "conservative" and "evangelical" churches. Catholic spirituality in some ways is a near replica of Buddhist spirituality- just camouflaged.

Ignatius of Loyola (AD 1491-1556)

"From the first moment of his conversion, Loyola [born in Loyola, Spain] was attracted by the great deeds of saints like Dominic and Francis. 'If they could so distinguish themselves in the service of the Lord, why cannot I?'" (O'Malley, 6) "A night spent before the Black Madonna at the Benedictine monastery in Montserrat prompted Loyola to exchange his robe and sword for a pilgrim's staff and the rough cloak and sandals of a beggar. A spell at Manresa saw him begging, praying, fasting, and flagellating, allowing his hair and fingernails to grow to uncommon length, being treated to visions, and working on his *Spiritual Exercises*." (Wright, 18)

A Life of Penance

Ignatius narrated the story of his life to a fellow Jesuit named Goncalves da Camara. It is written in the third person, but is usually called an "autobiography" since it was told directly by Ignatius and then recorded by Goncalves da Camara. In Tylenda's translation of this autobiography, Ignatius said of himself, "...he began to think more seriously about his past life and how greatly he needed to do penance for it." (Tylenda, 48) Throughout his life, Ignatius also begged alms just as the Franciscans and Dominicans before him, and he continued his practice of penances. "...the desire to resume his former penances returned to him. He made holes in the soles of his shoes and kept enlarging them little by little, so that when winter's cold came there was nothing there but the upper part of the shoes." (Tylenda, 110-111)

Life or Death Decision Left to a Mule

Once Ignatius met a Moor who argued with him that Mary was not a perpetual virgin. Parting ways from that Moor, he regretted his lack of action: "Filled with anger against the Moor and thinking that he had done wrong in allowing a Moor to utter such things about our Lady, he concluded that he was obliged to restore her honor. He now decided to search out the Moor and strike him with his dagger for all that he had said." (Tylanda, 58) Ignatius finally left the decision of whether to use his dagger on this Moor, up to his mule. Since his mule led him in another direction, he did not pursue the Moor. He was unbiblically prepared to commit murder for something that is not even biblical (Mary's perpetual virginity). "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him." (Mark 6:3)

Idol Vigil, False Visions, and Serpent Form

At Montserrat, in front of a statue of Mary, Ignatius kept a vigil, attentive to the statue all night: "He spent the entire night there, sometimes on his knees, sometimes standing erect, with his pilgrim's staff in hand." (Tylanda, 62) Going to another city after this vigil in front of the idol, Ignatius reported of himself, "...it many times happened that in full daylight he saw a form in the air near him, and this form gave him much consolation because it was exceedingly beautiful. He did not understand what it really was, but it somehow seemed to have the shape of a serpent and had many things that shone like eyes, but were not eyes." (Tylanda, 65-66) Tylanda says of this "form", "...he came to know that it was the devil, and though he recognized it for what it was, nevertheless, that form continued to appear for the next fifteen years, that is, until Ignatius arrived in Rome." (Tylanda, 66)

Ignatius continued to have various visions: "[Ignatius] ...saw with inward eyes the humanity of Christ, whose form appeared to him as a white body, neither very large nor very small; nor did he see any differentiation of members...He has also seen our Lady in similar form.... many times he thought to himself: If there were no Scriptures to teach us these matters of faith, he would still resolve to die for them on the basis of what he had seen." (Tylanda, 77-78) Indeed, much of Ignatius'

life was not led by Scripture, but by subjective revelations which often contradicted Scripture.

Returning to speak about the form that was in the shape of a serpent, Ignatius said of himself, "Many times later it continued to appear to him, but as a mark of his disdain for it he drove it away with the pilgrim's staff he always had in his hand." (Tylenda, 79) The devil is not afraid of any pilgrim's staff. Jesus' disciples cast out devils in the name of Jesus Christ, not because of any personal merit or ability: "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." (Luke 10:17)

A theme of devotion to Mary runs throughout Ignatius' life. This included praying to her as well. "After he had been ordained a priest, he decided to wait another year before celebrating Mass, preparing himself and praying to our Lady to place him with her Son." (Tylenda, 177) "When he celebrated the Mass he also had many visions...Sometimes he saw God the Father, at other times all three Persons of the Trinity, and at other times our Lady, who was at times interceding for him and at times strengthening him." (Tylenda, 187)

The Jesuit Order (aka "The Society of Jesus")

Augustinian monk Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses of protest to the door of the Catholic church in 1517, and in 1527 the "Sack of Rome" took place. The Jesuit order, founded by Ignatius of Loyola, was officially recognized in 1540, and Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises were given official approval in 1548. The Council of Trent, which aimed at counteracting the Reformation, took place between 1545 and 1563.

In "History of the Popes" (1766), Archibald Bower, gave this summary of the Jesuit order: "It may be said with truth, that this order alone has contributed more than all the other orders together to confirm the wavering nations in the faith of Rome....to check the progress of the Reformation....and with it a blind submission to the Holy See, among the African, American and Indian infidels." (Wright, 13)

Some countries in Europe banned the Jesuits, and by 1773 the pope officially banned the Society, "With the papal brief *Dominus ac Redemptor*, a curious document that does not make any specific accusations against the Jesuits, but claims their removal is necessary for the sake of Christian peace, the Society of Jesus was destroyed." (Wright, 189) About 41 years later, in the year 1814, the Jesuits came back into favor and were re-established.

"Beyond a doubt, anti-Semitism had been an institutionalized canker within the Roman Catholic tradition...during the nineteenth century a Jesuit journal such as *Civiltà Cattolica* would continue to publish noxiously anti-Jewish material, and it is important to recall that the Jesuit prohibition of those with Jewish ancestry entering the Society would remain in force until as late as 1946." (Wright, 271)

Tylenda writes, "To help counteract the growing influence of the Reformation in Germany, he [Ignatius] established in 1552 a college in Rome for German seminarians so that they could be properly and thoroughly trained for the work that would be demanded of them on their return to their homeland." (Tylenda, 25)

"...Jesuit schools were established in Toulouse and Lyons during the 1560s in the immediate aftermath of violent attacks on local Protestant communities: having massacred four thousand Protestants, the Catholic population of Toulouse would happily turn to the Jesuits to revitalize the educational dimension of its social infrastructure." (Wright, 33)

The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola

"The most distinctive form of this Jesuit ministry of the Word was in fact the guiding of devout persons through the *Spiritual Exercises*." (O'Malley, 11) These exercises were officially approved by Pope Paul III in 1548. These exercises are designed to be completed in four weeks, and each day involves five exercises of an hour each. Room is made for those wanting to spend more or less time than this, but that is the general structure of these exercises. I'll be quoting here from Mullan's English translation of what Ignatius wrote in Spanish.

Ignatius wrote, "Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul." (Mullan, 12) Here already he places the emphasis on self effort rather than on Christ's merits to be saved. The Spiritual Exercises begin with a focus on people's sins, and then move towards doing penance. Realizing our sins should draw us to Christ to receive his free grace, not to do penances to save our own soul. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Galatians 3:24)

Ignatius also gives dead saints the role that belongs to Jesus Christ, "...the Saints, how they have been engaged in interceding and praying for me..." (Mullan, 21) "...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:34; see also Hebrews 7:25)

In this time of recognizing one's sins, Ignatius recommends, "...to deprive myself of all light, closing the blinds and doors..." (Mullan, 25) Following this is a section on how to do penance, which includes the areas of eating, sleeping, and chastising the flesh. In order to chastise the flesh, Ignatius suggests, "...wearing haircloth or cords or iron chains next to the flesh, by scourging or wounding oneself, and by other kinds of austerity." (Mullan, 26) One of the three reasons given for doing such penances is also, "...as satisfaction for the sins committed." (Mullan, 26) "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe..." (Romans 3:20-22)

Ignatius and Visualization

Ignatius prescribes the use of visualization for various situations, such as, "...see with the sight of the imagination...a Temple or Mountain where Jesus Christ or Our Lady is found..." (Mullan, 18) Also, in recommending a visualization on hell, Ignatius specifically directs the person to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch (using the imagination), and

to, "...ask for interior sense of the pain which the damned suffer..." (Mullan, 23) Sadly, this surely would motivate a person doing these exercises to increase their diligence in doing penances, instead of coming to Jesus where true forgiveness can be found. Regarding a visualization on the birth of Christ, Ignatius again advises using the five senses to imagine these scenes, including, "...what they are, or might be, talking about, and reflecting on oneself, to draw some profit from it." (Mullan, 33) This type of visualization is not recommended in the Bible, and it goes beyond the Bible in imagining conversations and then trying to profit from these imaginary conversations, instead of being edified by the sure Word of God.

In the two verses of the Bible which use the word "sensual" (being led by our senses and emotions rather than by faith), a negative connotation is given in both: "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." (James 3:15) "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." (Jude 1:19) Peter also says the opposite of what Ignatius advises, showing that the believers who had never seen Jesus, did not do visualizations: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing..." (I Peter 1:8)

More to Visualization Than "Meets the Eye"

Singer Michael Card has for a long time been walking on the ecumenical road with the Catholic church, from creating an album together with Catholic mystic John Michael Talbot in 1996, to promoting the works of Catholic mystics Brennan Manning and Thomas Merton. More recently, he has been promoting something called, "Biblical Imagination." An interviewer of Michael Card clearly sees the connection of what Card is promoting, with the visualization of Ignatius. Interviewer: "Your concept of the "informed imagination" made me think a lot about St. Ignatius...." Michael Card: "...The Catholics aren't as afraid of the imagination as the Protestants. I think Protestants are afraid of the imagination because every time the King James uses it...it's always evil." Card should have just stopped right there, instead of going on to try to justify it. Michael Card makes it sound like it's a phobia to not visualize,

90

rather than it being a matter of faithfulness, and not adding to the Word of God. ([www.patheos.com/ Resources/Additional-Resources/Cultivating -a-Holy-Imagination-Deanna-Witkowski-03-11-2011.html](http://www.patheos.com/Resources/Additional-Resources/Cultivating-a-Holy-Imagination-Deanna-Witkowski-03-11-2011.html))

Visualization is also used by occultists to communicate with spirit guides. And, such techniques are even being used in elementary schools under the guise of helping children to reach their full potential. These shamanistic practices are being camouflaged and brought into the church by the mystics of old, the emergent church, and also by psychotherapists. Dave Hunt and T.A. McMahon, in their book "Psychology and the Church," wrote, "Christian psychology's visualization picked up from Carl Jung, who learned it from his personal spirit guides, has spread widely throughout the professing evangelical church. This is one of Richard Foster's, Calvin Miller's, Cho's, Peale's and others' major teachings. Christianity has been redefined." (Hunt & McMahon, 172)

"Richard Foster promises that through visualizing Christ in some biblical setting from His life, as recorded in the Gospels, you can have Him actually come to you and speak to you: '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.' Contact has clearly been made with the spirit world- but not with God or Christ." (Hunt & McMahon, 168-169) "Visualization has proved to be the most effective ecumenical tool in Satan's arsenal.... Those Protestant 'inner healers' who justify their practice because the visualized 'Jesus' performs so well must explain how it is that the 'Mary' being visualized by the Catholics is no less real and can also 'heal.' And, of course both must explain how it is that all manner of 'guides' visualized by occultists (from 'space brothers' and Ascended Masters to coyotes and jaguars) perform just as well as 'Jesus' or 'Mary.' (Hunt & McMahon, 171-172)

Buddhist Visualization

In the context of Theravada Buddhism, Winston King talks about a type of meditation involving visualization: "The meditator gazes at some circular shape or distinctively colored area with such total and continued concentration that after continued practice he can produce its image

before his 'sight' with or without the original stimulus...imagining it as larger and larger until it becomes infinite, so to speak.... In this eighth jhanic-type state of awareness the meditator has erased all awareness of subject-object distinctions and is one with his awareness..." (King, 88) Staring at a statue of Mary like Ignatius did, would have probably had some similar effects, though maybe not as far reaching as this Buddhist example.

In another Theravada example, given by Paul Griffiths, the object of meditation is a corpse and also involves visualization. "...the practitioner centers her mind upon the relevant physical object (in this case one of the ten varieties of corpses) until she is able to form a mental image of the object and contemplate that image without necessarily any longer being in the presence of the actual corpse...it involves the withdrawal of the practitioner's senses from interaction with the external world and a centering of attention upon a mental image." (Griffiths, 52)

In Tantric Buddhism, used by Tibetan Buddhism and other branches of Buddhism, "Images are 'supports' for meditation.... The interiorization of iconography depends on Yogic disciplines of meditation and concentration whereby the image is, so to speak, cast on a mental screen by an act of creative imagination, after which it is 'realized' by the person meditating." (Saunders, 79) Another example from Tibetan Buddhism is given by Alex Wayman, "...one goes through an imaginative sequence, as in the Kriya Tantra practice, culminating in one's imagining oneself to be the deity, in this case the Buddha Vairocana...one imagines in front of one a Vairocana, like oneself, and identifies with him...one imagines that one's mind is in the shape of a moon disk within the heart of the Tathagata in front." (Wayman, 231)

Breath Prayers

As if the preceding recommendations of Ignatius would not distance a person sufficiently far from biblical teachings, he goes on to advise "prayer by rhythm" which is breath "praying." "...with each breath in or out, one has to pray mentally, saying one word of the Our Father, or of another prayer which is being recited: so that only one word be said

between one breath and another, and while the time from one breath to another lasts, let attention be given chiefly to the meaning of such word, or to the person to whom he recites it..." (Mullan, 60) Instead of focusing on the meaning of the word, attention can be given, "...to the person to whom he recites it..." This phrase is used because just before this advice, and also afterwards, various prayers are mentioned, some to God the Father, some to Christ, and some to Mary, the "Holy Queen." (Mullan, 60)

In the Purpose Driven Life, Rick Warren also recommends "breath prayers," although the focus is not on "breath," but on short phrase repetition. Warren says, "...use 'breath prayers' throughout the day, as many Christians have done for centuries. You choose a simple phrase that can be repeated to Jesus in one breath." (Yungen, 148-149) Here Warren nullifies what Jesus told us about prayer: "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do..." (Matthew 6:7) Rick Warren also recently went far afield in his ecumenism to endorse a book which aims at bringing people back to Catholicism: "The mission of Tom Peterson and Catholics Come Home to bring souls home to Jesus and the church is critically important during this challenging time in our history. I fully support this new evangelization project." -Rick Warren (www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=11347)

Breath "prayer" is never recommended in the Bible. It is something that is common in Buddhism, Yoga, New Age, and even the occult. In describing New Age meditation, Ray Yungen summarizes, "The two most common methods used to induce this thoughtless state are breathing exercises, where attention is focused on the breath, and mantras, which are repeated words or phrases.... The translation from Sanskrit is man, meaning to 'think,' and tra, meaning 'to be liberated from.' Thus, the word [mantra] literally means to escape from thought." (Yungen, 15)

Yoga Breathing Techniques Modified in Buddhism

Yoga, which had an influence on the Buddha, involved special breathing exercises also. "...Yoga, devoted itself to the acquiring and perfecting of a kind of psychic control.... Its goal was an extrasensory state, a kind of mystical union with the absolute forces of the universe. Its methods combined body control (breathing, posturing, etc.) and concentration of the mind..." (Saunders, 16) "The Buddhist legend had recounted as well the tutoring of Shakyamuni [the Buddha] by various Indian ascetics, the discipline including Yoga breathing techniques..." (Saunders, 204)

In an example from the Pali Canon, instead of focusing on words of prayers between breaths, as Ignatius did, it is recommended to focus on Buddhist doctrines between breaths. "...thus he trains himself; 'contemplating impermanence (in body, feelings, perceptions, volitional formations, consciousness), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating impermanence, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating detachment, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating detachment, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating cessation, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself, 'contemplating cessation, I shall breathe out...' " (www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an10/an10.060.piya.html)

Rules

At the end of this book of Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius gives some rules for maintaining "the true sentiment which we ought to have in the church militant." (Mullan, 92) Notably absent from these is any advice to read the Bible for instruction. Instead, we find such things as these advocated, "...obey, in all, the true Spouse of Christ our Lord, which is our holy Mother the Church Hierarchical...praise confession to a Priest, and the reception of the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar...praise much Religious Orders, virginity and continence, and not so much marriage as any of these...praise relics of the Saints, giving veneration to them and praying to the Saints; and to praise Stations, pilgrimages, Indulgences, pardons, Cruzadas, and candles lighted in the churches...praise the ornaments and the buildings of churches; likewise images, and to venerate them according to what they represent..." (Mullan, 92)

In the 13th rule, Ignatius even says, "...we ought always to hold that the white which I see, is black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it.... Because by the same Spirit and our Lord Who gave the ten Commandments, our holy Mother the Church is directed and governed." (Mullan, 93)

The many contradictions to biblical teachings we have seen already show us that it is not the same Spirit governing the Catholic church. In fact Jesus' words would apply very well to Ignatius' unbiblical rules: "And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye." (Mark 7:9;13)

Strangely, Dallas Willard, who is embraced by many "evangelicals," includes Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises on his website list of "recommended reading," along with books from several other Catholic mystics, including Teresa of Avila. (www.dwillard.org/resources/RecReading.asp).

Chapter 12

Teresa of Avila

Teresa of Avila (AD 1515-1582)

Born in Avila, Spain, Teresa of Avila is considered to be one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church. In AD 1298, pope Boniface VIII officially recognized the first four doctors of the Catholic church: Gregory the Great, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. The two qualifications for being a candidate for this title of doctor are, eminence in doctrine and exemplary holiness of life. This status must also be officially declared by the Catholic church. In 1970 the first woman doctor was added to the list. Now there are four women doctors: Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila, Thérèse of Lisieux, and Hildegard of Bingen. Many of the doctors have been mystics.

From the time when she was a teenager, Teresa exhibited unstable behavior, which continued into her adulthood. Bouyer, who was born into a Lutheran family in Paris, but converted to Catholicism in his twenties, wrote, "...[Teresa] was soon and for a rather long time to give dangerous signs of a tendency towards hysteria, if not of a total mental and physiological derangement.... She had to pass through twenty years, crossed by crisis in which neurosis is evident." (Bouyer, 94) In her early twenties, she entered the monastery of Carmel of the Incarnation, but after a few years she had health problems again, "...she was attacked by all kinds of troubles: persistent fever, cardiac weakness, more or less epileptic-type seizures..." (Bouyer, 95)

When Teresa was about 22 years old, she wrote of herself that, "After those four days, during which I was insensible, so great was my distress, that our Lord alone knoweth the intolerable sufferings I endured. My tongue was bitten to pieces..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 71) After those four days of being insensible she gave herself to "Joseph." "...I took for my patron and lord the glorious St. Joseph, and recommended myself earnestly to him.... St. Joseph having the title of father, and being His guardian, could command Him [Jesus]--so now in heaven He [Jesus]

performs all his [Joseph's] petitions. I have asked others to recommend themselves to St. Joseph, and they too know this by experience..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 74) This is a consistent theme among the Catholic mystics-- taking the focus and glory away from God who deserves all the praise, and giving this praise and glory to people instead.

Much of Teresa's life is led by experience, rather than by God's Word. She claimed to receive intellectual visions giving her "mystical understanding" of things. As we saw above, her mystical understanding of who Joseph is, contradicts what the Bible says. We are forbidden in the Bible to pray to anyone except to God. Teresa claimed, "...the Lord showed so much love for me by teaching me in many ways, that I have very little or almost no need for books." (Kavanaugh, 77) These intellectual visions, were, "...without image or explicit words." (Kavanaugh, 78) "The intellectual visions were soon followed by another kind of vision called the imaginative vision, in which Teresa now beheld Christ not only in a spiritual way but, within her imagination or fantasy, in a corporeal fashion as well." (Kavanaugh, 78)

"...in 1539 she had had a first imaginary vision of Christ, addressing vigorous reproaches to her." (Bouyer, 96) Then, from the time her father died of a serious illness in 1543, "... until 1555, she abandoned all personal prayer outside the Office recited in choir...In 1555, she had a startling experience of Christ's presence..." (Bouyer, 96) "After a period of visions accompanied by great devotion to the Rosary, she finally had, in 1559, the famous vision of the cherubim transpiercing her with a dart of fire." (Bouyer, 96) "A dart of fire"? "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (Ephesians 6:16) Sometime after this experience of the dart of fire, when Teresa would have been in her mid 40s, she had a strange experience, being tormented by the devil. "...when I found myself suffering so cruelly.... It pleased our Lord to let me understand that it was the work of Satan.... My body, head, and arms were violently shaken; I could not help myself..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 254)

Instead of calling on Jesus, Teresa's solution to this attack was the following: "I know by frequent experience that there is nothing which puts the devils to flight like holy water. They run away before the sign of the cross also, but they return immediately: great, then, must be the power of holy water." (Teresa, A. 1904; 254) It is easy to see the influence of the devil in Teresa's life and her ignorance of God's Word. Being "insensible" and "out of control" are themes that are seen repeatedly in Teresa's life.

"As early as 1558...her pious lay friend, Maria de Ocampo, had suggested that she [Teresa] found a Carmelite reform, returning to the primitive rule that had been more than mitigated in 1432...In April 1561, her new Jesuit director, Gaspar de Salazar, gave her his entire support." (Bouyer, 97) "...the grace of perfect union, which she [Teresa] calls 'spiritual marriage,' was given her in 1572 through an intellectual and imaginative vision of Christ in his sacred humanity." (Kavanaugh, 79)

Four Broken Cisterns

Teresa began to write a book about her life in 1560. In this book she presents a spiritual progression, using the metaphor of water. The first step is "the well" where a person meditates: "...by this term 'meditation' a combination of imagination feeding on gospel scenes, reflection...and finally an act of will...", is meant. (Bouyer, 100) The second step is "the water-wheel" (or "prayer of quiet"), in which, "...there is no longer any activity other than that of the will, which 'accepts being imprisoned by God like someone taken captive by the One who loves him.'" (Bouyer, 102) This already is beginning to sound like Buddhist detachment.

Step three is called, "the river," or "the spring," in which, "...our faculties themselves (memory-imagination, understanding and will) seem to go to sleep, so entirely occupied are they with God alone. This is what she [Teresa] depicts as 'a glorious madness, a heavenly insanity, in which true wisdom is acquired..." (Bouyer, 102) By the way, why go to all that trouble to get "true wisdom" (using a process that adds to the scripture and therefore is not "true"), when God has told us that all we have to do to get wisdom is to ask (James 1:5)? The fourth and last step

is called "rain," in which it is said that, "...such as union of our faculties with God is produced 'that one loses one's strength almost completely in a kind of annihilation that goes hand in hand with an excessively great and sweet joy.'" (Bouyer, 103) These stages do not resemble biblical prayer at all.

With these non-biblical practices people are taken away from worshipping God in spirit and in truth. "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:13)

More quotes from Teresa of Avila: "The soul, while thus seeking after God, is conscious, with a joy excessive and sweet, that it is, as it were, utterly fainting away in a kind of trance: breathing, and all the bodily strength, fail it, so that it cannot even move the hands without great pain; the eyes close involuntarily, and if they are open, they are as if they saw nothing.... The ear hears; but what is heard is not comprehended ...for all bodily strength vanishes..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 152)

What Teresa describes, rather than being spiritually helpful, is more like "zoning out" or going into a "zombie state": "At other times certain excessive impetuositities occur, accompanied with a certain fainting away of the soul for God, so that I have no control over myself..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 351) Doing a search in her autobiography, phrases like, "I cannot control it," "no control over itself," "I had no control over myself," "beyond control," frequently occur. This is the opposite of what the Bible says about the fruit of the Holy Spirit being self-control or temperance.

Levitation

Teresa wrote, "...some great ladies being present,--I threw myself on the ground; then the nuns came around me to hold me; but still the rapture was observed...It seemed to me, when I tried to make some resistance, as if a great force beneath my feet lifted me up. I know of nothing with which to compare it; but it was much more violent than the other spiritual visitations..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 164)

Levitation is also claimed in Buddhism. From the *Samyutta Nikaya of the Pali Canon*: "When a monk has thus developed & pursued the four bases of power [via concentration], he experiences manifold supranormal powers.... He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. Sitting crosslegged he flies through the air like a winged bird..." (www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn51/sn51.020.than.html)

More Books

In 1565, Teresa wrote a manual called, "Way of Perfection." Concerning this book, Bouyer wrote, "One should note the warlike tone of the introduction of this new volume. Teresa is now well-informed not only about the Lutheran schism but about all the troubles and oppositions that its repercussions involve all the way to Spain. For her, and this is very significant, the development of an authentic contemplative life is in the end the best weapon for combating a heresy that is based on justification by faith alone..." (Bouyer, 105)

In 1579, Teresa finished writing "The Interior Castle," detailing seven "mansions" of the spiritual life. "She would encounter Christ, her destined Bridegroom, only in the final and innermost retreats of her own interiority..." (Bouyer, 108-109) "The passage from the fifth mansion, which is therefore the prayer of quiet, to the sixth is marked by interior as well as external trials, which are the final preparation for what she calls the 'spiritual marriage.' These trials themselves alternate at that time with extraordinary experiences, raptures, ecstasies, flights of the spirit, as she says. Nevertheless, once the seventh and the highest mansion is attained, that in which the spiritual marriage is consummated, these phenomenon as well as the trials are transcended in a stable union." (Bouyer, 109-110)

In the "Interior Castle" Teresa wrote, "In the prayer of union the soul is asleep, fast asleep, as regards the world and itself: in fact, during the short time this state lasts it is deprived of all feeling whatever, being unable to think on any subject, even if it wished. No effort is needed here to suspend the thoughts.... This is a delicious death, for the soul is deprived of the faculties it exercised while in the body." (Teresa, A.

1921; 71-72) Whereas Ignatius of Loyola advocated a focus on the senses through visualization, idols, and doing penances, Teresa and other mystics advocate more of a withdrawal from the senses, but even here the focus is indirectly on the senses in wanting to achieve and experience an elated state of consciousness. In both cases though the mystic goes beyond the normal and biblical use of our senses.

Devotion to "Mary", "Joseph" and "Peter of Alcantara"

Teresa was very devoted to "Mary" and "Joseph": "Our Lord grant that all may be to the praise and glory of Himself and of the glorious Virgin Mary, whose habit we wear." (Teresa, A. 1904; 306) "...I have by experience found the royal Virgin help me whenever I recommended myself to her; and at last she has brought me back to herself." (Teresa, A. 1904; 49-50) "Afterwards I saw our Lady on my right hand, and my father St. Joseph on my left, clothing me with that garment. I was given to understand that I was then cleansed from my sins [cleansed by her sins via "Mary" and "Joseph," not Jesus?]. When I had been thus clad--I was filled with the utmost delight and joy--our Lady seemed at once to take me by both hands. She said that I pleased her very much by being devout to the glorious St. Joseph..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 277)

Supposedly, the "Lord" told her to do the opposite of what the Lutherans were doing, which encouraged her to maintain her devotion to "Joseph" and "Mary," "'What Satan was doing among the Lutherans was the taking away from them all those means by which their love might be the more quickened.... Those who are loyal to Me, My daughter, must now, more than ever, do the very reverse of what they do.' I understood that I was under great obligations to serve our Lady and St. Joseph, because, when I was utterly lost, God, through their prayers, came and saved me [saved by "Mary" and "Joseph," not Jesus?]." (Teresa, A. 1904; 379) Speaking of her confessor, the commissary-general, Teresa wrote, "I could not give thanks enough to God, and to my glorious father St. Joseph, who seemed to me to have brought him here. He was the commissary-general of the custody of St. Joseph, to whom, and to our Lady, I used to pray much." (Teresa, A. 1904; 246)

Teresa also claimed she had visitations from the deceased Franciscan friar Peter of Alcantara. "Since then, it has pleased our Lord that I should find more help from him than during his life. He advises me in many matters. I have often seen him in great glory. The first time he appeared to me, he said: "O blessed penance, which has merited so great a reward!" (Teresa, A. 1904; 223-225)

Summary

The Catholic church has not only accepted Teresa's teachings, but has exalted her to be a doctor of the church. The example from her life promotes praying to "Mary," "Joseph" and also a dead friar named "Peter of Alcantara." Her teachings include advice to let the soul go to sleep, "suspend the thoughts," combat "justification by faith alone," advocate the use of imagination (visualization), and "fainting away in a kind of trance." These kinds of teachings are very much in agreement with the dogmas of the Catholic church and with the teachings of other doctors of the Catholic church, but it is enigmatic why "evangelical" publishing houses, such as Bethany House Publishers and Multnomah Press, would publish the book "A Life of Prayer" a compilation of Teresa's works, promoting such an unbiblical example of "a life of prayer." The Bible is our guide to learn how to pray. Teachings which promise exciting experiences, but are more akin to Buddhism than to the Bible, will only lead away from God. God wants us to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Chapter 13

Chart # 3- Catholic and Buddhist Spiritualities

In the chart below is a comparison between Catholic and Buddhist spiritualities, showing that the Catholic mystics of old, although they clothed their teachings with Christian terms, actually were promoting much that is central in Buddhism.

Catholic Spirituality	Buddhist Spirituality
Withdrawing from the senses: "...our faculties themselves (memory-imagination, understanding and will) seem to go to sleep..." -Teresa of Avila (Bouyer, 102)	Withdrawing from the senses: "After a certain period, you will experience just that split second when your mind is fully concentrated on your breathing, when you will not hear even sounds nearby, when no external world exists for you." (Rahula, 70)
"...the affections of the soul are oppressed and constrained, so that they can neither move nor find support in anything; the imagination is bound and can make no useful reflection; the memory is gone; the understanding is in darkness, unable to understand anything; and hence the will likewise is arid and constrained and all the faculties are void and useless..." - John of the Cross (Peers, 102)	In describing the four altered states of consciousness most common in Buddhism (Sanskrit-dhyana), Griffiths says these are, "...aimed initially at withdrawing the practitioner's senses and thoughts from interaction with the external world and finally at bringing all mental activity to a halt." (Griffiths, 36-37)
"Please note that to arrive at this state, we have to mortify our senses..." -"Brother" Lawrence (Lawrence, 135)	"The four dhyanas are best understood as a series of altered states of consciousness characterized by an increasing degree of ecstasy. The term

"The only way to overcome the senses is to draw the soul completely inward...By focusing its attention inward, it weakens the senses..." -Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 54) I remained for a whole week far removed from this world. It seemed as though a veil were thrown over all earthly things...Alas! I found myself again on earth, and dryness at once returned to my heart." - Thérèse of Lisieux (Thérèse, 1912; 145)	'enstasy' literally means 'standing within.' An enstatic practice, then, is one aimed at the withdrawal of the practitioner's senses and thoughts from contact with the external world and at the reduction of the contents of her consciousness." (Griffiths, 38) "Jhana...signifies a state of trance in which all sensory input, aside from the subject of meditation, is totally excluded from awareness. At the higher jhanic levels the meditator is also incapable of speech or movement, and in the highest possible, attention is said to be without ordinary consciousness and to reach the trance of cessation." (King, 88)
Separation from Self: "At other times certain excessive impetuositities occur, accompanied with a certain fainting away of the soul for God, so that I have no control over myself..." - Teresa of Avila (Teresa, A. 1904; 351) "...the soul must gradually cease any activity. It must simply yield itself to the impulses of the divine Spirit until it is wholly absorbed in Him." -Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 158)	Separation from Self: "...you lose yourself completely in your mindfulness of breathing. As long as you are conscious of yourself you can never concentrate on anything." (Rahula, 70) "The supreme illusion that meditation seeks to overcome is the belief in a substantial self." (The Staff, xviii) "In this eighth jhanic-type state of awareness the meditator has erased all awareness of subject-

"The transformation...is recognized by the lack of distinction between God and their soul- it is no longer able to separate itself...from God... everything is equally God, because it has passed into its Original Source, reunited to its ALL, and changed into Him." - Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 199) "It is called a departure- that is, a separation from self so that we may pass into God. A total and entire loss of the person's will, which causes the soul to be totally empty of anything in itself." - Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 187)	object distinctions and is one with his awareness..." (King, 88) Speaking of Buddhist meditation, Saunders writes, "Samadhi is a condition of profound concentration, of absorption, when consciousness of separate subject and object ceases to exist and all blends indistinguishably into the One. It is a state of psychic oneness brought about by the suppression of all intellectual activity." (Saunders, 67) "...the meditation practice most frequently recommended in the canon: mindfulness of in-and-out breathing...Further contemplation would bring about a realization of the impermanence, stress, and lack of self...inducing a sense of dispassion, cessation, and letting go...Once these subtlest of attachments are abandoned, nothing would remain to bind one to the realm of samsara, and thus the mind would attain nirvana." (Robinson, 39-40)
Visualization: Regarding a visualization on the birth of Christ, the angel appearing to Mary, etc. Ignatius of Loyola advises using the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch to imagine these	Visualization: "...the practitioner would imaginatively identify himself with the unfortunate in question to the extent that he would, in an almost literal sense, become that unfortunate." (Griffiths, 62)

scenes, including, "...what they are, or might be, talking about, and reflecting on oneself, to draw some profit from it." (Mullan, 33) "...imagination feeding on gospel scenes..." -Teresa of Avila (Bouyer, 100) "We must not form any image of the Deity, though we may of Jesus Christ, seeing Him in His birth, or His crucifixion, or in some other state or mystery..." -Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 24)	In Buddhism it is claimed that a meditator can recall past lives. This is parallel to the visualization Ignatius advocates and false identities that are taken on. "He remembers thousands of births and many cycles of existence, and knows that in such a place he was a being of such a name and clan, and had certain experiences and length of life in each of these births." (Thomas, 182)
One-Pointed Concentration: Keeping a vigil in front of a statue, such as Ignatius of Loyola did, staring at a statue of Mary all night involves this kind of one-pointed concentration. "The two most common methods used to induce this thoughtless state are breathing exercises, where attention is focused on the breath, and mantras, which are repeated words or phrases..." (Yungen, 15) "Practicing the presence of God...a general and loving gaze at God [without reference to scripture- just a "one-pointed" gaze]..." -"Brother" Lawrence (Lawrence, 131)	One-Pointed Concentration: "...the meditator is encouraged to proceed beyond the realm of form to the trances of the formless realm, in which concentration moves from its focus on material objects to successive one-pointed contemplations..." (Strong, 124-125) "Jhana...signifies a state of trance in which all sensory input, aside from the subject of meditation, is totally excluded from awareness..." (King, 88) Referring to the second trance (jhana in Pali; dhyana in Sanskrit), Thomas says, "...with the ceasing of reasoning and investigation, in a state of internal

"The only way to overcome the senses is to draw the soul completely inward to an awareness of the presence of the indwelling God [like Lawrence, she focuses only on God's "presence" having overcome her senses]..." -Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 54)	serenity with his mind fixed on one point, he attains and abides in the second trance..." (Thomas, 181) Thomas points out the similarities between Buddhist and Catholic spirituality. "...the attention is confined to one object, accompanied by a narrowing and intensification of consciousness with certain emotional changes." (Thomas, 186)
Death/Sleep/Cessation: "In the prayer of union the soul is asleep, fast asleep, as regards the world and itself: in fact, during the short time this state lasts it is deprived of all feeling whatever, being unable to think on any subject, even if it wished. No effort is needed here to suspend the thoughts.... This is a delicious death, for the soul is deprived of the faculties it exercised while in the body." -Teresa of Avila (Teresa, A. 1921; 71-72) "...the soul that is quiet and peaceful in prayer often sinks into a...mystical...slumber in which all of its powers are at rest...the soul is wholly adapted to this mystical slumber..." -Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 70)	Death/Sleep/Cessation: "...All of this can culminate in what is known as the trance of cessation (nirodha), a state in which all mental and most bodily functions are suspended. The meditator in such a state does not have thoughts, feelings, or sensory awareness of either the outside or the inside world." (Strong, 124-125) Griffiths explains further about the attainment of cessation. "It consists in the complete absence of all mental events and is often called a 'mindless' (acittaka) condition...like a catatonic or a patient in deep coma..." (Griffiths, 41) "A ninth stage known as the 'attainment of cessation' (nirodha-

"In this stage we have nothing but internal and external desolation...This desolation occurs quite violently in some...we begin to feel a general inability in respect to everything..." - Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 179-180)	samapatti) is also mentioned in some sources. In this stage all mental operations are completely suspended, and even heartbeat and respiration cease. Life subsists simply in the form of residual bodily heat. A person can, we are told, remain in this state for several days, eventually emerging from it spontaneously at a predetermined time." (Keown, 91-92)
Indifference: "... we ought always to hold that the white which I see, is black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it..." -Ignatius of Loyola (Mullan, 93) "But here in this mystical death of the soul, all things are alike...It has no preference between being an angel or devil..." - Madame Guyon (Chadwick, 185)	Indifference: "Here is no attitude of criticizing or judging, or discriminating between right and wrong, or good and bad. It is simply observing, watching, examining. You are not a judge, but a scientist." (Rahula, 73) "In this fourth and culminating altered state, then, affect has been reduced almost to nothing, and the analytical and classificatory activities of the mind have also been reduced to zero." (Griffiths, 40)

Chapter 14

John of the Cross

John of the Cross (AD 1542-1591)

Born in Spain, and a Carmelite, John of the Cross is also considered to be one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church. He is famous for the phrase, "the dark night of the soul," and wrote mostly about the first stage a contemplative goes through- that of "purgation." Most forms of mysticism recognize three stages the contemplative person goes through- purgation (detachment), illumination, and union: 1. In the purgative stage a person becomes detached from the things of this world, and becomes like an empty vessel to be filled; 2. In the illuminative stage the contemplative person becomes filled or "enlightened" with "insights;" 3. In the unitive stage, the person supposedly unites with God or becomes "one with everything", "absorbed", or fully realizes the "non-existence" of self and thus their (whose?) oneness with everything (as in the case of Buddhism).

Extrasensory State Leading to "Union"

An extrasensory state ending in union can be seen in Yoga, Buddhism, and also in the writings of John of the Cross. "...Yoga, devoted itself to the acquiring and perfecting of a kind of psychic control....Its goal was an extrasensory state, a kind of mystical union with the absolute forces of the universe." (Saunders, 16) John of the Cross wrote of the three stages, "...lulled to sleep by means of this blessed night of the purgation of sense, the soul went forth, to set out upon...the way of illumination or of infused contemplation....In those who have afterwards to enter the other and more formidable night of the spirit, in order to pass to the Divine union of love of God...it is wont to be accompanied by formidable trials and temptations." (Peers, 54)

Passive Detachment of the Senses

John of the Cross is quoted here, talking about the passive detachment of the senses. "For the language of God has this characteristic that...it transcends every sense and at once makes all harmony and capacity of

the outward and inward senses to cease and be dumb." (Peers, 109)
"And thus He leaves them so completely in the dark that they know not whither to go with their sensible imagination and meditation; for they cannot advance a step in meditation, as they were wont to do afore time, their inward senses being submerged in this night..." (Peers, 34)

"...God, by means of His own infusion, bestows upon the soul passively, secretly and in silence....it is needful that all the faculties should receive this infusion, and that, in order to receive it, they should remain passive..." (Peers, 100) "For the spiritual and the sensual desires are put to sleep and mortified, so that they can experience nothing, either Divine or human; the affections of the soul are oppressed and constrained, so that they can neither move nor find support in anything; the imagination is bound and can make no useful reflection; the memory is gone; the understanding is in darkness, unable to understand anything; and hence the will likewise is arid and constrained and all the faculties are void and useless..." (Peers, 102)

Like many of the suggestions of the mystics, these quotes are in stark contrast to the good example the Bereans set of having a "readiness of mind." "...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Inordinate Use of the Senses

In looking at Ignatius of Loyola, we saw the strong emphasis he placed on using the senses. By contrast, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross seem to focus on detaching from the senses. Taking a closer look though, all three of these mystics begin with the same basic stages mentioned above. For Ignatius' program, the person began by thinking of their sins and depriving the senses through penances (purgation). Later, emphasis was placed on visualizing and making full use of the senses (illumination). In Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross' writings, detachment from the senses is more plainly stated, and their writings then point in the direction of illumination.

Whether depriving the senses beyond natural limits, or inordinately indulging the senses, the advice of the mystics goes beyond what the Bible recommends. It seems that many "Bible believing" Christians have been "desensitized" by popular books and speakers instead of searching the scriptures daily as the Bereans did. Bill Randles has this good definition of mysticism. "Mysticism is the sensualization of our relationship with God and dealings with the spirit realm. By sensualizing, I am not referring to sexuality, but with the feeling realm. A mystic is someone who wants to know God intimately, but is not patiently waiting for the 'beautific vision.' He wants to see, touch, feel, and be one with God NOW. The mystic asks, 'Why can't we feel God? See Him? Go deeper and deeper with Him, into deeper levels of intimacy?' We can, but in His time and on His terms." (Randles, 100)

Matthew speaks of the "beautific vision." "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8) This is not for now, as Peter made clear. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (I Peter 1:8) "...for we walk by faith, not by sight..." (II Corinthians 5:7) "...the just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17) "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6) Having looked at the lives and teachings of three Spanish mystics, we will now look at the lives and teachings of three French mystics.

Chapter 15

"Brother" Lawrence

"Brother" Lawrence (AD ca. 1614-1691)

Frenchman Lawrence's Grand Vicar relates what Lawrence told him, "He [Lawrence] did not remember the things he did, and was almost unaware even when he was occupied in doing them. On leaving the table he did not know what he had eaten.... When an outward duty distracted him even a little from thinking about God, there came into his soul a reminder from God that gave him an even stronger thought of God. This memory inflamed his soul and set him afire, sometimes so strongly that he cried out and sang and leaped about like a madman." (Lawrence, 72)

Speaking of Lawrence's early career as a monk, and giving an example of a "one-pointed concentration," the Grand Vicar wrote, "He endured bodily austerities and long night watches, sometimes spending almost entire nights before the holy Sacrament." (Lawrence, 35) At one point, the Grand Vicar said Lawrence, "...could actually see the devil circling his bed, but he mocked the devil." (Lawrence, 54)

Like most of the mystics, Lawrence was also deeply devoted to Mary: "From the beginning of his novitiate, he applied himself fervently to the practice of the Religious Life. He was most devoted to the Holy Virgin and had a son-like confidence in her protection. She was his refuge in all the difficulties of his life...and it was his custom to call her his 'Good Mother.'" (Lawrence, 31)

Silent Conversation

In his own words, Lawrence's later method of prayer became, "...a silent, secret and nearly unbroken conversation of the soul with God." (Lawrence, 93) "I feel my entire spirit and soul rise without any trouble or effort and remain suspended and centered on God.... I know that some will treat this state as idleness.... I admit that it is a holy idleness..." (Lawrence, 95) This "silent conversation" is a contradiction of terms,

just like the supposed "silent sermon" of the Buddha from which Zen Buddhism claims to be derived.

Lawrence also wrote about his prayer technique, saying, "Practicing the presence of God...can be accomplished either through the imagination or by the understanding...a general and loving gaze at God...." (Lawrence, 131) "This gaze is the easiest, the most holy, the most solid and the most effective type of prayer." (Lawrence, 135) The steps towards achieving this "gaze" sound similar to Buddhist detachment, and also similar to the "zoned-out" state which his predecessor, and fellow Carmelite, Teresa of Avila experienced. These steps are given in Lawrence's own words. "Please note that to arrive at this state, we have to mortify our senses.... To be with God, one must absolutely leave all created things behind." (Lawrence, 135)

Biblically speaking, prayer is not a "silent" conversation, nor an imaginative "gaze" at God. Concerning the "silent" conversation, Lawrence wrote that it, "...is done in the depth and at the center of the soul....We would sometimes be surprised if we knew what the soul sometimes says to God..." (Lawrence, 132) He seems to be unaware even what his soul is "conversing" about. Likewise he was unaware of his outward actions, being detached from his senses, in order to "gaze" inwardly at God, for a "silent conversation."

It is somewhat of an abstract concept to focus on God's "presence" in a "silent conversation" all the time. Likewise it would be strange to focus on the "presence" of a friend or spouse, instead of actually having a relationship with them via a real conversation. Lawrence's focus is a non-verbal, abstract one, and becomes a one-pointed focus for eliminating all other considerations, "mortifying our senses." "In [Richard] Foster's book, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, Foster encourages readers to 'bind the mind' with 'breath prayers,' quoting Theophane the Recluse and making reference to Brother Lawrence, calling him a practitioner of this type of prayer." (Yungen, 149) This is very much in line with Buddhist meditation, but far from what the Bible is talking about when addressing the topic of prayer.

In the book of Exodus, Moses said to God, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." (Exodus 33:18) In response, God told him, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee...." (Exodus 33:19) When God fulfilled his promise to Moses in the next chapter, Moses did not get some abstract feeling or experience, but heard a mini sermon from God, giving him insight into God's character. "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." (Exodus 34:6-8)

Truth Trumped by Experience

The mystical methods are more akin to Zen Buddhism in which rationality must be overcome in order to live spontaneously. Lawrence's life of not remembering what he did and detaching himself from his senses, certainly was spontaneous and beyond rationality. Using reasoning to deny reasoning, Zen asserts that, "...reasoning is futile. Zen holds that nobody can actually think himself into a state of enlightenment, still less depend on the logical arguments of others. Rationality must eventually give way to intuitive insight, which alone frees a person to live naturally and spontaneously...." (Mason & Caiger, 169) This is an approach which downplays truth and exalts experience. Lawrence's life also exalted experience to the detriment of truth. We are supposed to love God with all of our mind (Matthew 22:37).

The tone of Lawrence's life is also reflected in the Zen philosophy used to train Japanese warriors in the past: "...what the Japanese perceived to be the Zen style: a quick and total awareness of the present, so free from distracting thoughts and dualisms that the swordsman attained a state of mushin (no-mind), at one with his sword." (Robinson, 261) Instead of focusing on an awareness of the present, or on an awareness of one's own Buddha nature (which is also a Zen practice), Lawrence focused on

"God's presence," but he did so not by using his mind to reflect on God's Word, or by using actual words to communicate, but simply by "gazing," turning off his senses, silently experiencing something, and using a method that is contrary to the Bible.

During World War II, "Rinzai monks were called on to...teach meditation as a way of instilling the single-minded "no-mindedness" of the Way of the Warrior- not only to soldiers, but to all whose total commitment would be needed to support the war effort." (Robinson, 263) This "mushin" (no-mindedness) is mystical and similar to what Lawrence practiced, but it's not biblical. Biblically speaking we are supposed to have a "sound mind" and this especially includes when we are praying. "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)

Chapter 16

Madame Guyon

Madame Jeanne Guyon (AD 1648-1717)

Gene Edwards, in an introduction to some of Madame Guyon's (citizen of France) writings, says, "The contents of a few of her writings can literally curl the hair of an evangelical. She was, first of all, a Roman Catholic." (Edwards, xiii) Edwards also makes mention of her connection to the other mystics. "After Guyon and her writings fell under the wrath of Louis XIV, she wrote a book entitled Justifications in which she explained her teachings, proved- at least to her satisfaction- that she was teaching only what Catholic mystics of the past had taught, and even commented on their commentaries." (Edwards, xiv) "Both Fenelon and Madame Guyon quoted Brother Lawrence in her trial...." (Lawrence, 20) Guyon was influenced by, and justified her methods from, the writings of Teresa of Avila and other mystics also.

"Mary" also held a prominent place in Guyon's life. Writing of her youth, Guyon said, "I did not fail to say my vocal prayers every day, to confess pretty often, and to partake of the communion almost every fortnight. Sometimes I went to church to weep, and to pray to the Blessed Virgin to obtain my conversion." (Plantinga, 23)

Guyon did not want to make images of saints. "Although I tenderly loved certain saints, as St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Teresa, yet I could not form to myself images of them, nor invoke any of them out of God." (Plantinga, 40) This did not stop her from praying through an idol of Jesus though. Guyon wrote in her autobiography about this after her husband died, and like other Catholic mystics, spoke of Christ as her personal spouse, "It was in the morning of July 21, 1676, that he died. Next day I entered into my closet, in which was the image of my divine spouse, the Lord Jesus Christ. I renewed my marriage-contract, and added thereto a vow of chastity, with a promise to make it perpetual, if M. Bertot my director, would permit me." (Plantinga, 83)

Guyon was also not opposed to visualizing Jesus, contrary to what the apostles taught in John 20:29 and I Peter 1:8. Guyon said, "We must not form any image of the Deity, though we may of Jesus Christ, seeing Him in His birth, or His crucifixion, or in some other state or mystery, provided the soul always seeks Him in its own center." (Chadwick, 24)

Withdrawn Prayer Method

The method of prayer which Guyon prescribed was in many cases foreign to what the Bible teaches. In some cases the parallels with Buddhism are plain to see. She would frequently recommend that people withdraw into themselves. "...sink into yourselves...withdrawing ourselves inward by faith.... Withdrawing inwardly is difficult in the beginning..." (Chadwick, 16-18)

Other advice (taking people away from logic and reason) in connection with Bible reading and prayer which Guyon gave includes, "...let your soul linger sweetly and silently on the Scripture verse you have read. Do not try to reason out the truth in it..." (Chadwick, 17) "We must, therefore, continue steadfastly and immovable in our abandonment, without listening to the voice of natural reason." (Chadwick, 36) "...sink into nothingness before Him..." (Chadwick, 46)

The following advice echoes the advice of Lawrence and Buddhist meditation, overcoming the senses. "The only way to overcome the senses is to draw the soul completely inward to an awareness of the presence of the indwelling God.... By focusing its attention inward, it weakens the senses, and is nearer to the inward awareness of God the more it is separated from the awareness of self..." (Chadwick, 54) Buddhism also seeks to separate a person from an awareness of self (anatta). The theological terms are different here, but an altered state of consciousness is sought in both, weakening the senses and going inward.

Guyon points out that those who do weaken and overcome their senses and separate from the awareness of themselves, also sometimes faint! That's not surprising, but she tries to justify this and make it sound like a good thing. "That is why those in whom the attraction of grace...is very

powerful, are...completely without energy and strength and are even subject to fainting." (Chadwick, 54)

Guyon continues with unbiblical advice for her would-be pupils. "...your soul should not attempt to do anything other than withdraw itself from external objects and turn inward." (Chadwick, 60) "The more passive and tranquil the soul remains, and the freer it is from self-effort, the more rapidly it advances..." (Chadwick, 61) "All our attention should, therefore, be directed toward developing the greatest amount of ability to withdraw inward." (Chadwick, 61) "All their praying is now done in silence...it is of the utmost importance to remain as silent as possible." (Chadwick, 68-69) "...the soul that is quiet and peaceful in prayer often sinks into a...mystical...slumber in which all of its powers are at rest...the soul is wholly adapted to this mystical slumber..." (Chadwick, 70) "The only way to find God is to direct your thoughts and feelings inward." (Chadwick, 75)

What we see as we read further in Guyon's instructions is a gradual but consistent path towards more passivity, more silence, more withdrawing, and finally a state of "slumber." This is not a biblical way to pray, but is more akin to Buddhist cessation in meditation. Guyon continues by actually discouraging praying with words, "Now that your soul has been called to a state of inward silence, you should not burden yourself with vocal prayers." (Chadwick, 93) This kind of an absolute and inward silence is a turning off of the mind. Instead of communicating with God in a relationship, an experience is the focus of this exercise.

Guyon falsely claims, "God exists in an infinite stillness, and for the soul to be united to Him it must participate in His stillness." (Chadwick, 155) "...the soul must gradually cease any activity. It must simply yield itself to the impulses of the divine Spirit until it is wholly absorbed in Him." (Chadwick, 158) These teachings are similar to the extreme Pentecostals who urge people to turn off their minds, not paying heed to what the Bible says, but instead just go with the flow of the "Spirit." But, God's Holy Spirit is the Spirit of TRUTH: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth..." (John 16:13)

God's Spirit will guide us into truth, not into ceasing from all activity. Guyon insists though that, "We can only be united to God in simplicity and passivity..." (Chadwick, 160)

Following along the path that Guyon suggests, "The fourth stage is naked faith. In this stage we have nothing but internal and external desolation.... This desolation occurs quite violently in some...we begin to feel a general inability in respect to everything..." (Chadwick, 179-180) Where in scripture is this sort of a path suggested? It is not. "But here in this mystical death of the soul, all things are alike. Now being dead, the soul is insensible to everything that concerns it.... It has no preference between being an angel or devil..." (Chadwick, 185) This "mystical death" is not "dying to self" or being "born again" as described in the Bible. It is an extra-biblical experience that is suggested by Guyon. She goes on to describe an extra-biblical life, not from God, but from within. "...the life that is now communicated arises from within...It is, as it were, a living germ that has always existed there, although undetected." (Chadwick, 186)

"In this state of resurrection comes that indescribable silence, by which we not only exist in God, but commune with Him." (Chadwick, 196) Guyon concludes with this enigmatic statement: "The transformation...is recognized by the lack of distinction between God and their soul- it is no longer able to separate itself...from God... everything is equally God, because it has passed into its Original Source, reunited to its ALL, and changed into Him." (Chadwick, 199) A little earlier in her advice on prayer, Guyon says that, "It is called a departure- that is, a separation from self so that we may pass into God. A total and entire loss of the person's will, which causes the soul to be totally empty of anything in itself." (Chadwick, 187)

I would also call this a "departure," but not in the sense that Guyon meant. "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." (I Timothy 4:1) Guyon was zealous in many regards, but not according to the knowledge given by God in His Word. If people ignore

God's Word to follow after experiences, it will lead to a departure, and will also lead to missing out on the righteousness of God, which He will give to anyone freely, who comes to Him on His terms. "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:2-3)

Nowadays many people in "evangelical" and "conservative" churches are promoting the writings of the Catholic mystics, or promoting modern authors who point to the mystics. Some of these modern authors include Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Larry Crabb, Brennan Manning, Shane Claiborne, Henri Nouwen, and especially many of the emergent church authors (Brian McLaren, Tony Jones, Doug Pagitt, Rob Bell, etc.) Considering that mysticism or contemplative spirituality is the steam that drives the engine of the emergent church (as Roger Oakland pointed out), and that many of the mystics are "doctors" of the Catholic church, promoting them is akin to staging one's own spiritual shipwreck. (For more on Madame Guyon please see Appendix 2)

Chapter 17

Thérèse of Lisieux

Thérèse of Lisieux (AD 1873-1897)

Thérèse's (French) parents had nine children and dedicated all of them to Mary. They also named all of them Mary (spelled the French way-- Marie)-- even the two boys who died in infancy were named Mary (Marie Joseph Louis and Marie Joseph Jean Baptiste)! Thérèse's given name was originally Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin. "Mother" Teresa of Calcutta named herself after this Thérèse. In Thérèse's life, "Mary" seems to take center stage. At the age of 9, Thérèse faced a serious illness. Thérèse wrote of herself, "The illness was undoubtedly the work of the devil.... However, he little knew that the Queen of Heaven was watching faithfully over her Little Flower, that she was smiling upon it from on high." (Thérèse, 1912; 41) "I do not know how to describe this extra-ordinary illness. I said things which I had never thought of; I acted as though I were forced to act in spite of myself; I seemed nearly always to be delirious; and yet I feel certain that I was never, for a minute, deprived of my reason." (Thérèse, 1912; 35)

Thérèse attributed her cure, not to God, but to "Mary." "...she came in again and knelt in tears at the foot of my bed; turning towards the statue of Our Lady, she entreated her...I too...turned to my Heavenly Mother, begging her from the bottom of my heart to have pity on me. Suddenly the statue seemed to come to life and grow beautiful, with a divine beauty that I shall never find words to describe." (Thérèse, 1912; 37) "When we reached Paris, Papa took us to see all the sights. For me there was but one--Our Lady of Victories...In this holy spot the Blessed Virgin, my Mother, told me plainly that it was really she who had smiled on me and cured me. With intense fervour I entreated her to keep me always.... I prayed specially to St. Joseph to watch over me; from my childhood, devotion to him has been interwoven with my love for our Blessed Lady." (Thérèse, 1912; 66)

This "queen of heaven" which Catholics often refer to is not the Mary of the Bible at all, but rather is the continuation of an idolatrous practice from Old Testament times: "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?" (Jeremiah 7:18-19)

When Thérèse was 15 years old, she became a Carmelite nun. She continued as a nun for nine years until she died at the early age of 24 of tuberculosis. Thérèse was later deemed to be one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church. While at the convent, her prioress asked her to write down her life story. Given this task, she took it to "Mary": "Before setting about my task I knelt before the statue of Our Lady which had given my family so many proofs of Our Heavenly Mother's loving care. As I knelt I begged of that dear Mother to guide my hand, and thus ensure that only what was pleasing to her should find place here." (Thérèse, 1912; 11)

Using statues for religious purposes is idolatry. In addition to that, it becomes a form of visualization, when a person pictures their idol even when they are not in front of it. This is just the natural outcome of idolatry, causing people to focus on imaginary images rather than on the real words of God in His Word. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image..." (Exodus 20:4)

While a nun, Thérèse was heavily influenced by John of the Cross' writings, "I have obtained many spiritual lights through the works of St. John of the Cross. When I was seventeen and eighteen they were my only food; but, later on, and even now, all spiritual authors leave me cold and dry." (Thérèse, 1912; 96-97) John of the Cross also wrote much about the unbiblical concept of being personally (not corporately) espoused to Christ. At the age of 17, in 1890, Thérèse wrote of her so called "espousal" to Christ. "God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, and the Glorious Virgin Mary,

Queen of the Heavenly Court, announce to you the Spiritual Espousals of their August Son, Jesus, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, with little Therese Martin..." (Thérèse, 1912; 90)

Mystical Experiences

Speaking of a "rapture" she had, Thérèse said, "I was in the choir, beginning the Way of the Cross, when I felt myself suddenly wounded by a dart of fire so ardent that I thought I should die. I do not know how to explain this transport.... It seemed as though an invisible force plunged me wholly into fire.... But oh! what fire! what sweetness!... I have had several transports of love, and one in particular during my Noviciate, when I remained for a whole week far removed from this world. It seemed as though a veil were thrown over all earthly things.... Alas! I found myself again on earth, and dryness at once returned to my heart." (Thérèse, 1912; 145) In that rapture we also see the influence of John of the Cross' passive detachment of the soul.

Like Francis of Assisi, Thérèse longed to have Christ's wounds on herself. "And since Thou hast deigned to give me this precious Cross as my portion, I hope to be like unto Thee in Paradise and to behold the Sacred Wounds of Thy Passion shine on my glorified body." (Thérèse, 1912; 145)

Thérèse sent a letter to her sister, recommending to her a type of visualization on Jesus' face. "MY DEAREST CELINE,--I send you a picture of the Holy Face. The contemplation of this Divine subject seems to me to belong in a special way to my little sister..." (Thérèse, 1912; 204) Thérèse also wrote a prayer designed for novice nuns to pray to a picture of Jesus' face. "O Adorable Face of Jesus.... Dear Spouse of our souls, if we could love with the love of all hearts, that love would be Thine.... Give us, O Lord, this love! Then come to thy Spouses and satisfy Thy Thirst." (Thérèse, 1912; 246-247)

Penance and Suffering

"...it cost me a great deal to perform certain exterior penances, customary in our convents...it seemed to me that the image of my

Crucified Lord looked at me with beseeching eyes, and begged these sacrifices." (Thérèse, 1912; 148) From the epilogue of her autobiography an example is given. "It happened, however, that she fell ill through wearing for too long a time a small iron Cross, studded with sharp points, that pressed into her flesh." (Thérèse, 1912; 148)

"For several days, during the month of August, Thérèse remained, so to speak, beside herself, and implored that prayers might be offered for her...she kept repeating: 'Oh! how necessary it is to pray for the agonising! If one only knew!' One night she entreated the Infirmarian to sprinkle her bed with Holy Water, saying: 'I am besieged by the devil. I do not see him, but I feel him; he torments me.... And I cannot pray. I can only look at Our Blessed Lady and say: 'Jesus!'...I am not suffering for myself, but for some other soul, and satan is angry.' (Thérèse, 1912; 152)

Not the Mary Nor the Jesus of the Bible

Right up to the end of her life, Thérèse kept her attention fixed on "Mary", "In the morning, the sweet Victim, her eyes fixed on Our Lady's statue, spoke thus of her last night on earth: "Oh! with what fervour I have prayed to her!.... And yet it has been pure agony, without a ray of consolation..." (Thérèse, 1912; 162) It is sad to see that Thérèse, this "doctor" of Roman Catholics, was in need of learning who the real Jesus of the Bible is-- not one who demands penances and who is prayed to through Mary, nor one who must be approached through mystical techniques.

The Catholic church has gone far afield with their doctors and traditions, when all that we need to know about Jesus and salvation is in God's Word, the Bible. "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." (II Corinthians 11:4) "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 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." (II Timothy 4:2-4)

Apparitions

Thérèse assumed in her lifetime that people would pray to her after she died, "When asked before her death how they should pray to her in Heaven, Soeur Therese, with her wonted simplicity, made answer: 'You will call me 'Little Therese'-- petite Therese.'" (Thérèse, 1912; 166) Patricia Treece wrote a book published in 2001 called, "Apparitions of Modern Saints: Appearances of Thérèse of Lisieux, Padre Pio, Don Bosco, and Others: Messages from God to His People on Earth." Supposedly Thérèse comes to visit people and people also pray to "her." This is called necromancy and consulting with familiar spirits, and is condemned in the Bible.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 states, "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire....or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD..." Also, such "familiar spirits" are not really the ones people think they are, but rather are "angels of light" or deceiving spirits, trying to take people's attention away from God. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness..." (II Corinthians 11:14-15). Such attention is also given to dead people in Buddhism, instead of glorifying God.

Chapter 18

"Mother" Teresa and Three Recent Popes

"Mother" Teresa of Calcutta (AD 1910-1997)

In her youth, Agnes (Teresa of Calcutta), in her home country of Albania, was inspired by "Father" Jambrekovic, a Jesuit priest who, "...set up a youth group called the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary." (Sebba, 17) Jambrekovic also shared many missionary stories, especially about Jesuit missionaries, with the youth group and challenged them with the example of Ignatius Loyola.

"On 24 March 1931, Agnes took her first vows, those of poverty, chastity and obedience as a sister of Loreto. She felt inspired to take her name in religious life from a French nun called Thérèse Martin.... There was, however, a slight problem about the name...[another nun] had already taken the name of Marie-Thérèse. In order to obviate confusion, Agnes decided to spell it in the Spanish way, 'Teresa', invariably leading people to ask whether she had taken the name of the great Spanish Carmelite nun. 'Not the big St Teresa of Avila...but the little one,' meaning of course, St Thérèse of Lisieux." (Chawla, 8)

Teresa was part of the Loreto Sisters from 1928 until 1950, when she founded her own order, called the Missionaries of Charity. "Her choice of the Loreto Sisters, the Irish branch of one of the top women's orders, the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM), was perhaps more significant than she realized, although it is highly unlikely that she knew much if anything about, Mary Ward [AD 1585-1635], foundress of the Order she was joining..." (Sebba, 29-30) Mary Ward and the order she founded were heavily influenced by Ignatius of Loyola's ideas. Having been part of the Loreto Sisters for over 20 years, Teresa also would have been very much influenced by Ignatian spirituality.

On a Loreto Sister's website, this history is given: "It became even clearer to Mary [Ward] in 1611 what this form of life would be: it was to be modeled on the way of life and the spirituality of the Society of Jesus

[Ignatius' Society aka the Jesuits]. In 1621, after much thought and several "Plans" for their way of life, Mary prepared for the authorities in Rome a final document, adapted from a Jesuit source. This 'Third Plan' (Institutum I) sketches out a women's community very closely resembling that of the Society of Jesus..." (www.ibvm.ca/about/history/first-foundation)

When Mary Ward founded her own community of nuns, she named it Loreto Abbey. "Loreto was a shrine in Italy to which Mary Ward was especially devoted." (Sebba, 31) The Loreto shrine in Italy was supposedly where the Virgin Mary lived at one time. Teresa of Calcutta was also especially devoted to "Mary."

Devotion to "Mary" and Three Visions of "Mary"

Writing to some of her sisters, Teresa wrote, "I brought a big Easter candle with the image of Our Lady with the child on it.... If you have the Easter candle, please light it before Our Lady in thanksgiving..." (Kolodiejchuk , 301) Teresa also said, "Please pray for me that I will be only all for Jesus through Mary." (Kolodiejchuk , 309)

Teresa believed she would be guided by "Mary" too, "...keep close to Mary the Mother of Jesus and our Mother. She will guide & protect you and keep you only all for Jesus. Let nothing and nobody ever separate you from the love of Jesus and Mary." (Kolodiejchuk, 314) "Only after her death would they [the sisters] learn about the three visions Mother Teresa had in which Our Lady had pleaded with her to answer the call of Jesus and the call of the poor." (Kolodiejchuk , 322)

Devotion to the Eucharist

When Teresa was hospitalized in 1996, her doctor noticed, "'When that box is there, in the room, she is just looking and looking and looking at that box.' The Hindu doctor was an unknowing witness to the power of the Eucharist over our Mother." (Kolodiejchuk, 328) This is similar to "Brother" Lawrence's night watches in front of the Eucharistic Sacrament, maintaining a one-pointed focus. Since 1973, it was part of Teresa's daily routine to "adore" the Sacrament for one hour.

Rules

In Teresa's Rules for her order, she says that aspirants to her order must, "...spend a year in contemplation and manual labor...They must learn to be contemplatives in the streets and slums just as much as in their convents." (Kolodiejchuk , 343) The word "contemplation" has mystical connotations in the Catholic context.

In the section under Spiritual Exercises she does not specifically recommend reading the Bible. Instead, she recommends, "...half an hour's Meditation...the full rosary- the litanies of Our Lady and Saints and half an hour of spiritual reading...in contemplation and penance together with solitude she can gather spiritual strength.... In the practice of corporal penances the Sisters shall be guided by the judgment of the confessor alone." (Kolodiejchuk , 345-346)

We see that focus is directed towards "Mary" and other "saints," instead of to Jesus Christ, and that corporal penance was also practiced, under the guidance of a confessor. According to Felix Raj, director of the "Goethals Indian Library," "Mother Teresa had habitually preferred Jesuits as retreat preachers, spiritual directors and confessors for herself and her Sisters." (www.goethals.in/collections/felixrajarticles/InfluenceMotherTeresa.htm)

Retreat and Routine

In a 12 day retreat Teresa did in 1959, each day of the retreat is under the patronage of a different person, rather than all being under God's direction and influence: "Under the patronage of my Guardian Angel.... Under the patronage of St. Ignatius.... Under the patronage of St. Francis Xavier.... Under the patronage of Mary, Queen of Heaven..." (Kolodiejchuk , 350-360)

"Mother Teresa rose every morning at 4:40 a.m. and, after community prayers and meditation on the Word of God from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m., attended Holy Mass.... At 6:00 p.m. there was an hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament (since 1973)..." (Kolodiejchuk , 391)

Identity

Teresa also falsely took on the identity of being Christ's spouse individually, "Now and for life I am the spouse of my Crucified Spouse." (Kolodiejchuk , 304)

By her own admission Teresa did not have the witness of the Holy Spirit to confirm her standing with God. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:16) Teresa said, "Inside it is all dark and feeling that I am totally cut off from God." (Kolodiejchuk , 306) "She had stopped writing about her darkness and rarely spoke about it, but suffered from it as intensely as she had for the past thirty-five years." (Kolodiejchuk , 306)

Ecumenism: Blurring the Lines

The spirituality of the Catholic church has moved from sending Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits to declare inquisitions on heretics, to embracing almost any belief. "...Catholic contemplatives have adopted Zen teachings and techniques to aid them in the search for God. Pioneers in this process were Father Hugo Enomiya-Lassalle (1898-1990), a German Jesuit missionary to Japan, and Thomas Merton (1915-1968)..." (Robinson, 301)

Teresa of Calcutta was also a pioneer in blurring the lines between beliefs. "I've always said we should help a Hindu become a better Hindu, a Muslim become a better Muslim, a Catholic become a better Catholic." (Teresa, M., 31) Putting this philosophy into practice, Teresa said, "In Yemen, which is an entirely Muslim country, I asked one of the rich people to build a Masjid there [a Masjid is a Mosque]. People needed a place to pray. I said to him: 'They are all your Muslim brothers and sisters. They need to have a place where they can meet God.'" (Chawla, 214)

While many Roman Catholics have moved towards unity with the world's religions, some "evangelicals" have moved towards unity with Catholicism. Larry Crabb is one of these "evangelicals" who is embracing Rome. Mystic Brennan Manning who was a favorite author

of Crabb, had this to say about "centering prayer," "...the first step in faith is to stop thinking about God at the time of prayer.... Choose a single, sacred word...repeat the sacred word inwardly, slowly, and often." (Yungen, 88) Crabb doesn't see any problems with the above advice. Crabb said, "I've practiced centering prayer. I've contemplatively prayed.... I've benefited from each, and I still do." (*The Papa Prayer*, p. 9) Crabb speaks of his rejection of the truth as if he has overcome a psychological disease. "I'm glad that as a conservative evangelical who still believes in biblical inerrancy and penal substitution, I've gotten over my Catholic phobia, and I've been studying contemplative prayer, practicing lectio divina, valuing monastic retreats..." (www.lighthouse-trails-research.com/blog/?tag=larry-crabb)

Shane Claiborne, a promoter of a social gospel, said, "[Mother] Teresa] seemed to be giving the gospel a pretty good shot..." "Did Mother Teresa relate the gospel of repentance and grace through faith alone to those dying.... Claiborne wrote nothing about the lepers' repentance and faith in Christ. Mother Teresa's own writings testify that she did not try to convert people." (www.mennonitebrethren.net/?p=209) In an interview with mystic Tony Compolo, Claiborne also reveals his leanings towards ecumenism. "*Claiborne*: You also note in your book the encounter of Francis of Assisi and the Muslim Sultan...they came together across major religious divides and had a mystical unity.... Maybe we will even find a mystical union of the Spirit as Francis did." (www.mennonitebrethren.net/?p=209)

Three Recent Popes:

Pope John Paul II (was pope from AD 1978-2005):
"I remember especially March 25, 1984, the Holy Year. Twenty years have gone by since that day when in spiritual union with all the bishops of the world I entrusted all of mankind to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in response to Our Lady's plea in Fatima." (www.ewtn.com/vnews/getstory.asp?number=44989) Mike Oppenheimer wrote concerning John Paul II's ecumenism, "On the second anniversary of Assisi's historic prayer meeting, the Pope recently declared that the efforts of 'Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists [etc.]...were unleashing profound spiritual

energies in the world and bringing about a 'new climate' of peace.'" (www.letusreason.org/RC25.htm)

Pope Benedict XVI (pope from AD 2005-2013):

Denial of what Scripture says about Mary, deferring to dogma and tradition: "When one recognizes the place assigned to Mary by dogma and tradition, one is solidly rooted in authentic christology...Marian dogmas: first that of her perpetual virginity and divine motherhood and then, after a long period of maturation and reflection, those of her Immaculate Conception and bodily Assumption into heavenly glory." (www.crossroadsinitiative.com/library_article/591/Don_t_Forget_Mary__Cardinal_Ratzinger__Pope_Benedict_XVI_.html)

Pope Francis (pope from AD 2013- present)

Pope Francis is the 266th pope and the first Jesuit pope: "He had told a crowd...just after his election that he intended to pray to the Madonna 'that she may watch over all of Rome'.... Francis considers social outreach, rather than doctrinal battles, to be the essential business of the church." (news.yahoo.com/pope-francis-prays-rome-basilica-1st-outing-083235180.html) Pope Francis' statement doesn't agree with the Bible, but agrees very well with Rick Warren's statement: "I'm looking for a second reformation. The first reformation of the church 500 years ago was about beliefs. This one is going to be about behavior. The first one was about creeds. This one is going to be about deeds. It is not going to be about what does the church believe, but about what is the church doing." - Rick Warren (Yungen, 144)

Pope Francis said, "The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the Blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! 'Father, the atheists?' Even the atheists...And this Blood makes us children of God of the first class!...And we all have a duty to do good... 'But I don't believe, Father, I am an atheist!' But do good: we will meet one another there." (www.theblaze.com/stories/2013/05/23/pope-francis-sermon-sparks-debate-even-the-atheists-have-been-redeemed-with-the-blood-of-christ/)

The lines have been blurred, and the real anti-dote to spiritual shipwreck, the Bible, has been set aside or minimized. Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."
(Matthew 15:9)

Chapter 19

Events in the East at This Time

Whenever people choose to reject God and His Word, the Bible, whether it's the Catholic church, Buddhism, or people of any country, they automatically choose to follow their own man-made and imperfect standard. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." (Psalm 2:1-3) In this chapter we'll look at some of the events that occurred in Buddhist nations from the 16th through the 21st centuries. Rejecting God's standard often has immediate and negative results, while at other times the results will only become evident on the day of judgment. The psalm quoted above also says, "....Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Psalm 2:12)

Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

In 1950, the not yet prime minister of Ceylon (called Sri Lanka since 1972), S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, declared before the World Fellowship of Buddhists that man is free to decide for himself regarding what is right and wrong, without reference to God's will: "The Buddha preached that ultimate freedom of man when the human mind need not be subject even to the will of God, and man was free to decide for himself what was right or wrong..." (Swearer, 117)

With a philosophy like this, Bandaranaike should not have been surprised that three years after being elected as prime minister, someone did decide for himself what was right by shooting and fatally wounding him (he was elected in 1956 and assassinated in 1959). That someone was not a Hindu Tamil, whom his government had marginalized, but a fellow Buddhist, who was a monk. He simply followed Bandaranaike's advice and decided for himself. And where did "ultimate freedom" lead for Ceylon? In the article,

"No middle way for Sri Lanka's militant monks", written in 2007, it is plain that the Buddhist monks there are still not opposed to the use of violence: "As the war that has ravaged Sri Lanka for 25 years enters a new and terrible phase, Rathana and his fellow hardline monks are urging President Mahinda Rajapaksa to keep the promise on which he came to power in late 2005: to crush the Tigers with military force." (www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/06/15/1181414556706.html?page=fullpage)

Burma

Burma has had a history riddled with dictators, in spite of being a very devout Buddhist nation. At times, the lack of an absolute standard in Buddhism, has helped to create the necessary vacuum for a dictator to step in. "...all these kings were Buddhists; the most warlike of all, Bayin Naung [king from AD 1551-1581] evidently saw himself, as Hall puts it, 'as a model Buddhist King building pagodas where ever he went, distributing copies of the Pali scriptures, feeding monks...' (Ling, 29) "A new ruler, who called himself Alaungpaya, 'the Great Lord, Buddha-to-be' [reigned from AD 1752 to 1760]...had begun to extend Burmese domination once again over the whole area east of Thailand. He defeated the Shans who had controlled upper Burma, and the Mons in lower Burma." (Ling, 41) "As he [Alaungpaya] approached Ayudhaya he showed what he could do by massacring the defenceless local population regardless of age and sex and covering the rivers with their corpses." (Ling, 43) A later Burmese king, Hsinbyushin, invaded Thailand and conquered Ayudhaya in AD 1767.

"Bodawpaya [reigned from AD 1782-1819] can be said to have had two major preoccupations, military and religious. When he was not engaged in costly wars of territorial expansion he was busy with equally costly pagoda building programmes, for which, as Cady says, he had a mania...He believed himself to be a Bodhisattva, or Buddha-to-be..." (Ling, 49) "In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Sangha was split by the robe dispute: should monks in public cover both shoulders or only one? Under pressure from King Bodapawya the dispute was settled in favor of both shoulders." (King, 107)

During World War II, "'The period of Japanese military rule [in Burma] lasted only three years, but to the Burmese people it was more irksome than some sixty years of British rule...The Japanese imposed a reign of terror'...These were the realities of coexistence with 'fellow Buddhists' of another nationality." (Ling, 101)

Thailand

In the same year that Chiang Mai was founded, the central Thai kingdom invaded Cambodia. "The Thais first attacked Angkor in 1296, taking slaves and pillaging the capital. Then in 1352-1430 the Kingdom of Ayutthaya attacked and looted Angkor four times, enslaving and imprisoning many Khmer." (www.cambodianview.com/buddhist-history1.htm) "When Ayudhya was sacked and destroyed by the Burmese in 1767, King Tak Sin the Great, then a general of the Thai army, was able to liberate his motherland within seven months." (Na-Rangsi, 110)

The Mongol Empire and Tibet

In 1578 Sonam Gyatsho (AD 1543-1588), "...converted the Mongol ruler, Altan Khan, to Buddhism...because Gyatsho was regarded as the tulku of his two predecessors, he became known as the Third Dalai Lama, with the title of First and Second granted retroactively to them." (Robinson, 288) A "tulku" is supposedly someone who intentionally reincarnates so as to "resume leadership after his reincarnated form..." (Robinson, 286) "With the help of Mongol troops, the Fifth Dalai Lama crushed his enemies in central Tibet and became ruler of the entire country." (Robinson, 288). The Fifth Dalai Lama (AD 1617-1682) is also the first Dalai Lama to claim that he is an incarnation of Avalokitesvara (known in Japan as Kannon). "Thus he became the first figure in Tibetan history to combine the tradition of tulku and bodhisattva emanation in one person." (Robinson, 288) "...Maitreya, Manjusri, and Avalokitesvara [Kannon]...These great beings are nonhistorical; there is no evidence that any of them is an apotheosis of a human hero...Strangely, no Sutra preaches devotion to a celestial bodhisattva until the third century C.E...." (Robinson, 105)

"The Sixth Dalai Lama...is credited with being the author of a series of erotic poems based on his exploits in the brothels of Lhasa. For a period, his fellow lamas debated whether he was a Tantric adept of the old school or a mere lecher. They finally decided that Avalokitesvara had abandoned him...the Ninth through the Twelfth died in childhood, perhaps of foul play...The Fourteenth Dalai Lama (b. 1935), enthroned in 1950 just before the Chinese Communists invaded Tibet, was forced to flee the country in 1959..." (Robinson, 288-289) As of 2013, the position of "Dalai Lama" is about 622 years old, counting from Gendun Drup (AD 1391- 1474), who was posthumously named as the "first Dalai Lama."

Japan

"This amalgamation of Buddhism and Shinto...was the dominant form of religion in Japan from the eleventh century to the mid-nineteenth century. Even after the forcible separation of the two faiths for political reasons in the 1870s, the amalgam has lived on among the people." (Mason & Caiger, 108)

From the Ashikaga Period through the Edo Period (AD 1333-1868), Japanese Buddhism was somewhat "institutionalized." "All Buddhist sects aside from Soto and Rinzai [both Zen] had formed armed societies to protect their interests, only to be slaughtered by the hundreds of thousands, which destroyed Buddhism's credibility as an instrument for national unity." "...the long period of uneventful existence, of status quo, the absence of new ideas or challenges from abroad, were ultimately to sap the vitality of Buddhist institutions until, by the end of the Tokugawa period [1868], their condition can at best be called apathetic." (Saunders, 247)

From the Kamakura Period (1185) until the beginning of the Meiji Period (1868), Japan was mostly ruled by shoguns. It was during this time that the Jesuits first came to Japan. Saunders writes, "The early success of the Jesuit teachings was striking. This was due in part to the fact that the converts considered Christianity a form of Buddhism, a

confusion rendered all the more acute by the use of Buddhist and Shinto terms to apply to Christian concepts." (Saunders, 243)

"...at the beginning of the Meiji era [1868], Buddhism was at its weakest. The years of stultification under Tokugawa control had terminated in the identification of the religion with the shogunal power...In 1867, the shogunate collapsed, and the next year Buddhism was disestablished and largely disendowed." (Saunders, 255) After World War II, "...the emperor publicly denied his divinity....[there was] for the first time in Japanese history, a totally secular government; to give individuals total religious freedom." (Robinson, 264) Many new sects of Buddhism emerged in Japan, while most of the older sects also made a come-back.

China

"As the religion of the masses, Buddhism also became the religion of the disaffected. Some of the lay Buddhist organizations- such as the White Lotus Society, loosely connected with the Tien-t'ai school [which became Tendai in Japan]- actually staged insurrections against the Mongol and Manchu rulers. The White Lotus rebellion at the end of the eighteenth century (1796-1804) took the ruling Manchus 10 years to suppress. A few notorious temples, such as the center at Shao-lin, trained monks in the martial arts, but the Sangha as a whole remained aloof from such affairs." (Robinson, 211)

Chapter 20

Jesus or Mary?

In the lives of the mystics we've looked at here, "Mary" holds a very central role. This central role is also promoted by popes. "In the cathedral of Quito, the largest Catholic church in Ecuador, you will see in the center of the altar a crucifix with Mary hanging on the cross, shedding her blood for your sins. Mary, not Jesus!" (Carlson & Decker, 225) We've also seen how the lives of the mystics were led by visions, dreams, spirit encounters, and experiences, rather than upon the solid rock of God's Word. The techniques they used, such as visualization, statues of Mary, penances, repetitious prayers, focus on the Eucharist, detaching from one's senses, and going into altered states of consciousness, are all likewise things which take a person away from worshiping God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

In many cases the techniques used by Catholic mystics and contemplatives have much in common with Buddhist techniques. The former prime minister of Ceylon, declared that, "The Buddha preached that ultimate freedom of man when the human mind need not be subject even to the will of God, and man was free to decide for himself what was right or wrong..." (Swearer, 117) The Catholic church has in many ways done exactly that-- deciding for themselves what is right or wrong, instead of looking to the Bible, God's Word.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
(Revelation 22:18-19)

It is a good thing to be able to recognize one's own "lukewarmness," and be zealous to repent. (Revelation 3:16-19) What does this entail though? Instead of following the biblical way of repentance, many non-Catholics who want revival or renewal in their prayer lives have looked to the Catholic mystics. In doing so, these sheep have not received food to nourish their hungry souls, but instead have come to trees, "...without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." (Jude 1:12) Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34) That should be our food as well-- to do God's will. If we are doing God's will, we will be fed from His Word, and will be His witnesses in a generation that needs to know the truth of God's Word.

Part IV: Summary

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:23-31)

Chapter 21

Overview and Review

Catholic spirituality in many ways uses the "modus operandi" of Buddhist spirituality. There are many Christians who would never participate in Buddhist meditation, rituals, or chanting, who nonetheless would accept identical techniques and philosophies which are clothed in "Christian" terminology. It's the same poison, but presented in a different package. Catholic spirituality is essentially Buddhism camouflaged. In the three parts preceding this one, details were given of this. It's hard to see the overall patterns (the bird's eye view), when looking at just the details. In this chapter, key figures influential in Catholicism are looked at briefly, pointing out red flags and errors in their lives and teachings. Looking at a condensed summary of their lives will show us a different viewpoint of their history, while stating the case against Catholicism and mysticism. In AD 1298, Pope Boniface VIII officially recognized the first four doctors of the Catholic church: Pope Gregory I, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. The two qualifications for this title of "doctor" are eminence in doctrine and exemplary holiness of life. This status must also be officially declared by the Catholic church. Almost 700 years later, in 1970, the first woman doctor was added to the list. Now there are four women doctors among the 35 doctors to date: Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, Thérèse of Lisieux, and Hildegard of Bingen. Many of the doctors have been mystics. Several of the mystics have been founders of new orders in the Catholic church. Whether they were "founders" or "doctors," the Catholic church has endorsed the lives and teachings of many mystics, pointing people further and further away from God's Word.

Pivotal Influencers in Catholic Spirituality

Origen (ca. AD 185-254)

Extreme asceticism and doctrinal speculation characterized his life. Although Origen and Evagrius were declared to be anathema (accursed) after their deaths, they were nonetheless two men who helped "get the

ball rolling" in a mystical direction. Origen was not a monk, but virtually lived like one, even having himself castrated to live a celibate life. His teachings were so influential in monasticism and mysticism, that McGinn says of him, "...his [Origen's] thought....was the major force that shaped the theology that grew out of the desert experience." (McGinn, 1997; 110) Among others, Origen influenced Evagrius regarding the casting off of thoughts (non-discursive prayer) for the purpose of experiencing "God."

Antony of Egypt (ca. AD 251-356)

Living a celibate life, Antony went into the Egyptian desert and practiced extreme asceticism. He also practiced the repetitive "Jesus" prayer and a type of prayer where the person praying has so much forgotten himself that he is not conscious that he is praying! He had many experiences battling with demons, as if waging war after the flesh. Antony inspired many others to head into the Egyptian desert for a solitary life, seeking after mysteries. Antony's life story was endorsed and written by Athanasius of Alexandria, one of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church.

Ambrose, one of the first four doctors (ca. AD 340-397)

Ambrose brought Platonic and Neo-Platonic ideas into the church, put the Song of Solomon as the central model for mysticism through church sacraments, and exalted the ideal of virginity. He also spoke of "mystical drunkenness" and "sleep," encouraging contemplators to experience "God" in a passive state of their soul. And, Ambrose promoted monasticism, using large amounts of his own money.

Evagrius Ponticus (AD 346-399)

Evagrius was an Egyptian monk. He seriously influenced John Cassian, who in turn brought these mystical ideas to Gaul (modern France). Evagrius taught that the spiritual path requires a person to get beyond words, thoughts, and concepts-- to have a "naked" mind as he called it, which would end in a sort of silent "gazing" at "God."

Jerome, one of the first four doctors (AD ca. 347-420)

Jerome lived for a while as a hermit in a Syrian desert in an effort to do penance, and he promoted monasticism and asceticism. In contrast to what the Bible records, he believed that Mary was a perpetual virgin. He also claimed that the single life is better than the married life. "Jerome's defense of monasticism, especially evident throughout his letters, contributed much to the triumph of the monastic ideal in the West." (McGinn, 1997; 216)

Augustine, one of the first four doctors (AD 354-430)

When he was in his thirties, he was baptized by Ambrose. He founded his own monastic community and committed himself to live a celibate life. He was the man who, more than any other, set the Catholic ship's compass to sail in a different doctrinal direction, towards what would eventually become full-blown Roman Catholicism. He was a promoter of doctrines such as infant baptism, Mary's perpetual virginity, purgatory, the persecution of heretics, and the Eucharist being sacrificed to help the dead. These doctrines would be spelled out more fully later, but he was "pivotal" as a direction changer. He was also a foundational man in relation to mysticism. Scholar McGinn says of him, "...he [Augustine] was also an author who gave considerable attention to the mystical element in Christianity and to whom almost all later Western mystics appealed." (McGinn, 1997; 231)

John Cassian (AD c. 360-435)

Cassian was heavily influenced by monasticism in Egypt and later moved to Gaul where he founded two monasteries and promoted the ideas he learned in Egypt. John Cassian advocated visualization, and other typical ideas from Egyptian monasticism such as wordless prayers, withdrawing from one's senses, and being so absorbed that a person is unconscious that they are even praying. The Roman Catholic church considers him to be a saint.

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (AD ca. 485-532)

This writer completely embraced the illogical, and idealized "unknowing." One of the 35 doctors of the Catholic church,

Bonaventure, saw Pseudo-Dionysius as an exemplary teacher of the mystical aspects of scripture. Martin Luther on the other hand saw Pseudo-Dionysius as being too Platonic. Pseudo-Dionysius spoke of "God's" presence causing a person to go beyond thought, beyond reason, beyond intellect, beyond senses, beyond knowledge, beyond all names, and beyond words; which then resulted in union with "God."

Pope Gregory I, one of the first four doctors (AD 540-604)
McGinn wrote of Pope Gregory, "While he does not possess the creativity of an Origen, the penetration of an Augustine, or the speculative profundity of a Dionysius, he ranks with these three in stature and influence in the history of western mysticism." (McGinn, 1994; 38) Pope Gregory held to a sacrificial/sacramental understanding of the Eucharist, though not fully developed in all of its later connotations, thus diminishing the sufficiency of the cross of Jesus, rather than a "remembrance/thanksgiving" understanding of it. In his mysticism and contemplation, Pope Gregory emphasized "interior silence" and being withdrawn from or "asleep" to all things outside.

Bede, one of the 35 doctors (ca. AD 673-735)
In Bede's history, he gives his stamp of approval to many of the traditions of men, which have been found throughout the history of the Catholic church, such as relics, salvation by works, the Eucharist being a sacrifice, praying for the dead, praying to the dead, the perpetual virginity of Mary, and purgatory. Bede also wrote approvingly of contemplation in silence and solitude, monasteries, monastic discipline, extreme asceticism, and those living as hermits or anchorites.

Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the 35 doctors (AD 1090- 1153)
Bernard attributed to Mary the role of being an intercessor or Mediatrix (mediator) and was especially devoted to her. Bernard advocated persecuting Bible believing Christians, and was a major supporter of the second Crusade. In his verbal attack on the Christians, he defended infant baptism and praying to saints. In Bernard's mysticism, he held to such concepts as visualization, departing from the corporeal senses, "sacred drunkenness," achieving the status of the Bride, an experience

comparable to sleep from which the Bridegroom did not want the Bride to be awakened, and allowing the mind to get beyond logic.

Francis of Assisi, founder of an order (AD 1181- 1226)

The Franciscan Order was founded by Francis. "Among the many Catholic orders, Franciscans have proportionally reported higher ratios of stigmata and have claimed proportionally higher ratios of visions of Jesus and Mary." (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franciscan) Francis embraced the false idea that an individual believer could be the bride of Christ and the bride of the Holy Spirit. Biblically speaking, true believers together are the bride of Christ. Francis also believed in the transubstantiation of the Eucharist, and that to be saved a person must receive the Eucharist only from priests. Francis practiced repetitious prayer, and, "...great abstinence...macerating his body and invigorating his soul by fervent prayers, vigils, and disciplines...." (Ugolino, 99) Supposedly, Jesus came to Francis as a six winged seraph, pierced his body (leaving the stigmata), and told Francis that after he died Francis could go to purgatory once a year to take out all who were devoted to him (to Francis). It was often reported both before and after receiving the stigmata from "Jesus the seraph" that Francis was in a coma-like state as a result of practicing his spiritual disciplines.

Bonaventure, one of the 35 doctors (AD 1217-1274)

Like Pseudo-Dionysius and Bernard of Clairvaux before him, whom he also approved of, Bonaventure wrote regarding mystical contemplation, "In this passing beyond, if it is perfect, it is necessary that all intellectual operations be left behind...." (McGinn, 1998; 110) Bonaventure took up leadership of the Franciscan order for about 17 years and wrote prolifically to promote mysticism. In addition to the above example, Bonaventure taught a type of visualization in which one's identity is altered. "...he [Bonaventure] then asks his reader to become each cherub in turn in order to contemplate the paradoxical coincidences..." (McGinn, 1998; 109) The Franciscan order, like Bernard of Clairvaux also advocated persecuting Bible believers. A man named Gerard Sagarellas wrote a book against the Franciscans to which Bonaventure replied. Eventually that Christian man was put to death. Van Braght

wrote, "The Dominicans and Franciscans, though they seemed to be very simple and modest, were nevertheless the principal actors [inquisitors] in this matter." (Van Braght, 317) "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." (Galatians 4:29)

Ignatius of Loyola, founder of an order (AD 1491-1556)

Ignatius founded the Jesuit Order. The Jesuits persecuted Bible believing Christians heavily and did much to stop the spread of the Reformation. Also, the Jesuits had a history of anti-Semitism. "...it is important to recall that the Jesuit prohibition of those with Jewish ancestry entering the Society would remain in force until as late as 1946." (Wright, 271) Throughout his life Ignatius practiced penances using ascetic methods. Not long after his "conversion" he kept a vigil keeping his focus fixed on a statue of Mary all night. Ignatius also prayed to Mary and was led by unbiblical visions. In his "Spiritual Exercises" Ignatius' suggestions for doing penance include, "...wearing haircloth or cords or iron chains next to the flesh, by scourging or wounding oneself, and by other kinds of austerity." (Mullan, 26) Ignatius also advocated the use of detailed visualizations and breath prayers. Ignatius held to and promoted a blind obedience to the Catholic church, and said, "...we ought always to hold that the white which I see, is black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it..." (Mullan, 93)

Teresa of Avila, one of the 35 doctors (AD 1515-1582)

Teresa suffered during her youth from epileptic type seizures. She sought for protection from "Joseph" and devoted herself to him. Later in her life she had various visions and experiences, once claiming to have been pierced through by a fiery dart. Sometime after this experience of the dart of fire, when Teresa would have been in her mid-40s, she had an experience of being tormented by the devil. "...when I found myself suffering so cruelly....It pleased our Lord to let me understand that it was the work of Satan.... My body, head, and arms were violently shaken; I could not help myself..." (Teresa, A. 1904; 254) Teresa often wrote about no longer being in control of herself. Her method of contemplation is similar to that of other mystics. "...our faculties

themselves (memory-imagination, understanding and will) seem to go to sleep.... This is what she [Teresa] depicts as 'a glorious madness, a heavenly insanity, in which true wisdom is acquired...' (Bouyer, 102) In the example of her life we see a person tormented by the devil, and who unbiblically prayed to "Mary," "Joseph," and a deceased "friar." Teresa wrote several books. These include advice to "suspend the thoughts," combat "justification by faith alone," advocate the use of visualization, and "fainting away in a kind of trance."

John of the Cross, one of the 35 doctors (AD 1542-1591)

In the three mystical stages of purgation, illumination, and union, John of the Cross focused mostly on the first stage of purgation (detachment), which is the context from which his famous phrase "the dark night of the soul" came from. Like other mystics, the things he described that a person should go through are something foreign to what the Bible recommends. John of the Cross wrote, "For the spiritual and the sensual desires are put to sleep and mortified.... the imagination is bound and can make no useful reflection; the memory is gone; the understanding is in darkness, unable to understand anything; and hence the will likewise is arid and constrained and all the faculties are void and useless..." (Peers, 102) His description of this passive detachment from the senses is more akin to Yoga and Buddhism than it is to biblical spirituality.

"Brother" Lawrence (AD ca. 1614-1691)

The key phrase in Lawrence's life was "the presence of God," but what he meant by that is truly mystical. It was a "silent" conversation, without words-- just experiencing "God's" presence. According to Lawrence's Grand Vicar, "He [Lawrence] did not remember the things he did, and was almost unaware even when he was occupied in doing them.... When an outward duty distracted him even a little from thinking about God, there came into his soul a reminder from God.... This memory inflamed his soul and set him afire, sometimes so strongly that he cried out and sang and leaped about like a madman." (Lawrence, 72) Lawrence sometimes spent entire nights in front of the Eucharist, and was very devoted to "Mary," considering "her" to be his refuge. Lawrence's goal of gazing at "God" was supposedly achieved by

mortifying the senses and leaving all created things behind. God's Word was not central in Lawrence's life-- instead the "silent" presence of "God" was his focus. These unbiblical ideas resulted in Lawrence living an idolatrous and zoned-out life.

Madame Jeanne Guyon (AD 1648-1717)

Guyon was a Roman Catholic, but is also associated with the Quietists, who shunned vocalized prayers. She wrote, "Now that your soul has been called to a state of inward silence, you should not burden yourself with vocal prayers." (Chadwick, 93) She prayed to Mary and also had an idol of Jesus, and visualized "Jesus," thinking of herself as Jesus' personal spouse, contrary to biblical teachings. Guyon opposed the use of logic, and speaks of "mystical slumber" and withdrawing from the senses to be "passive." She concluded with this amoral statement: "But here in this mystical death of the soul, all things are alike. Now being dead, the soul is insensible to everything that concerns it...It has no preference between being an angel or devil..." (Chadwick, 185) Guyon further concluded with a practically pantheistic statement: "The transformation...is recognized by the lack of distinction between God and their soul- it is no longer able to separate itself...from God... everything is equally God, because it has passed into its Original Source, reunited to its ALL, and changed into Him." (Chadwick, 199) Her unbiblical advice also included the following. "When your mind has wandered, don't try to deal with it by changing what you are thinking.... Instead, withdraw from your mind!" (Guyon, 12) And, Guyon wrote, "May I hasten to say that the kind of prayer I am speaking of is not a prayer that comes from your mind. It is a prayer that begins in the heart.... Prayer that comes out of the heart is not interrupted by thinking." (Guyon, 4)

Thérèse of Lisieux, one of the 35 doctors (AD 1873-1897)

Thérèse prayed in front of idols of "Mary" throughout her life, and also prayed to "Joseph." She was very much influenced by the writings of John of the Cross, and like him, promoted the concept of being personally (instead of corporately) espoused to Christ. In the following description of Thérèse's rapture we see John of the Cross' passive

detachment of the soul lived out. "...I remained for a whole week far removed from this world.... Alas! I found myself again on earth, and dryness at once returned to my heart." (Thérèse, 1912; 145) Thérèse also recommended visualizing the face of "Jesus," using a picture of "Him," and practiced penances. "...it cost me a great deal to perform certain exterior penances, customary in our convents...it seemed to me that the image of my Crucified Lord looked at me with beseeching eyes, and begged these sacrifices." (Thérèse, 1912; 148) From the epilogue of her autobiography an example is given. "It happened, however, that she fell ill through wearing for too long a time a small iron Cross, studded with sharp points, that pressed into her flesh." (Thérèse, 1912; 148) Thérèse's emphasis on penances shows that she did not understand salvation by faith, through the grace of Jesus Christ. And her attention was taken away from Jesus, praying to "Mary" and "Joseph." Mysticism replaces the Word of God with the traditions of men.

"Mother" Teresa of Calcutta, founder of an order (AD 1910-1997) Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity Order. That was after being a member of the Loreto Sisters for more than 20 years, an Order that was modeled after the Jesuit system founded by Ignatius of Loyola. "Mother" Teresa named herself after Thérèse of Lisieux, but spelled her name the Spanish way. Like many of the mystics, Teresa was very devoted to "Mary," and also to the Eucharist, even "adoring" it an hour a day, in a one-pointed focus. She advocated penances in the rules for her Order and the use of the rosary. Teresa's understanding of the gospel was upside down. She said, "I've always said we should help a Hindu become a better Hindu, a Muslim become a better Muslim, a Catholic become a better Catholic." (Teresa, M., 31) Putting this philosophy into practice, Teresa said, "In Yemen, which is an entirely Muslim country, I asked one of the rich people to build a Masjid [a Mosque] there. People needed a place to pray. I said to him: 'They are all your Muslim brothers and sisters. They need to have a place where they can meet God.'" (Chawla, 214)

No Small Drift From God's Word

Most of the 20 people listed here have something in common-- they were all celibate, with the possible exception of Bede, and Pseudo-Dionysius (not much is known about his life). This excessive promotion of celibacy began early in the Catholic church. "Jovinian, a monk active in the last decades of the fourth century, denied that virginity was higher than marriage and doubted the perpetual virginity of Mary. He was attacked by Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine in various polemical writings." (McGinn, 1997; 202) Mandatory celibacy for the priesthood was not enacted and completely enforced until the 11th and 12th centuries AD.

"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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:1-3)

The Roman Catholic church meets at least six of the conditions in the above verses: departing from the faith, heeding seducing spirits, heeding the doctrines of devils, speaking lies, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats. They depart from the faith, heed the doctrines of devils, and speak lies by promoting mysticism and other doctrines which are not in God's Word. They heed seducing spirits by praying to the dead. They forbid their clergy from marrying, which has resulted in untold damage in scandals with children. Before Vatican II (1962-1965) meat was banned for Catholics every Friday. After Vatican II, this was adjusted to focus mainly on the Lent season, and flexibility was given for other Fridays. Scott Richert explains, "Many Catholics don't realize that [the] Church still recommends abstinence on *all* Fridays of the year, not just during Lent. In fact, if we don't abstain from meat on non-Lenten Fridays, we're required to substitute some other form of penance." (catholicism.about.com/od/catholicliving/p/Abstinence.htm)

In Buddhism, monks will sometimes invite non-Buddhists to try meditating as a way of getting them interested in Buddhism. Mysticism is also held out to unsuspecting Christians, like an entry-level introduction that would eventually lead a person far from the Bible. Among others, Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Larry Crabb, Brennan Manning, Shane Claiborne, Rick Warren (some specifics are given of these men in other chapters of this book), and especially many of the emergent church authors (Brian McLaren, Tony Jones, Doug Pagitt, Rob Bell, etc.) are promoters of an unbiblical mysticism. Considering that mysticism or contemplative spirituality is the steam that drives the engine of the emergent church (as Roger Oakland has pointed out), and that many of the mystics are "doctors" of the Catholic church, promoting them is akin to staging one's own spiritual shipwreck.

Lack of Feeding on God's Word

In a list of articles which John Huss (AD ca. 1369-1415) adopted from John Wycliffe's (AD ca. 1320-1384) writings, items are included such as the vanity of praying for the dead, the non-existence of purgatory, that images should not be tolerated, and also that, "The wicked devils have invented the unspiritual mendicant orders." (Van Braght, 748) The mendicant orders meant the Roman Catholic monastic orders. Huss and Wycliffe understood that these were "doctrines of devils" and that Catholic teachings falsely declare the insufficiency of the cross, and the insufficiency of the Bible.

Many Christians today are seeking after personal experiences, wanting God to bless them, instead of obeying the great commission and keeping God's Word. J.C. Ryle (AD 1816-1900) wrote of George Whitefield (AD 1714-1770) saying, "At one time he seems to have greedily devoured such books as Thomas Kempis, and Castanuzza's Spiritual Combat, and to have been in danger of becoming a semi-papist, an ascetic, or a mystic, and of placing the whole of religion in self-denial." (Whitefield, 15) Praise God that George Whitefield came to read the Bible in earnest, and then turned his attention to preaching the gospel to the lost. Whitefield wrote, "I began to read the Holy Scriptures upon my knees, laying aside all other books, and praying over, if possible, every

line and word. This proved food indeed and drink indeed to my soul. I daily received fresh life, light, and power from above. I got more true knowledge from reading the *Book of God* in one month than I could ever have acquired from all the writings of men." (Whitefield, 15) Ryle concluded, "Once taught to understand the glorious liberty of Christ's gospel, Whitefield never turned again to asceticism, legalism, mysticism, or strange views of Christian perfection." (Whitefield, 15)

Speaking of God's Word, Horatius Bonar (AD 1808-1889), a Scottish pastor and open air preacher, who also wrote over 600 hymns, and defended D.L. Moody from criticisms when he visited Scotland, wrote, "It will lead us into all truth.... It will save us from the intellectual dreams of a vain philosophy, from the vitiated taste of a sensational literature, from the specious novelties of spiritual mysticism, from the pretentious sentimentalisms of men who soar above all creeds and abhor the name of 'law,'....One goes to it for truth, but loses sight of the TRUE ONE, thereby deceiving himself with the mere shadow or specter of knowledge and religion. Another goes to it for the True One-- a person, not an abstraction-- but, losing sight of the truth, he works out for himself a scheme of mysticism and dreaminess, which has in it, indeed, the appearance of warmth and vitality; but is still little better than religious sentimentalism." (Bonar, 6) "Religion in a soul or a church must be sick and ready to die, when it requires the use of stimulants to restore it, the stimulants of music, and dresses, and postures, and ceremonies; or the stimulants of speculation and mysticism, and the 'enticing words of man's wisdom.' Rather, we may say, that it is dead; and these are galvanic appliances to make a dead man look, and stare, and roll his eyes like a living one." (Bonar, 19-20)

The Holy Spirit was not given to entertain Christians, but to empower them in their witness and service-- to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus told His disciples, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) R.A. Torrey (AD 1856-1928) wrote, "...in a world such as we live in to-day where sin and self-righteousness and

unbelief are so triumphant, where there is such an awful tide of men, women and young people sweeping on towards eternal perdition, I would rather go through my whole life and never have one touch of ecstasy but have power to witness for Christ and win others for Christ and thus to save them, than to have raptures 365 days in the year but no power to stem the awful tide of sin and bring men, women and children to a saving knowledge of my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." (Torrey, 1910; 141)

Torrey also said, "It is not by seasons of mystical meditation and rapturous experiences that we learn to abide in Christ; it is by feeding upon His word, His written word as found in the Bible, and looking to the Holy Spirit to implant these words in our hearts and to make them a living thing in our hearts." (Torrey, 1900; 35) Nowadays false teachers such as Pope Francis and Rick Warren want to minimize doctrine, focusing instead on "good deeds." The Bible says that to obey is better than to sacrifice (I Samuel 15:22) and that if we love Jesus we will keep His words (John 14:23).

Another theme frequently advocated by the mystics is throwing logic out the window. Whether we realize it or not, logic or the lack thereof affects all of us deeply. Philosophies that are thought up in "ivory towers" eventually trickle down into the fabric of societies, through popular movies, music, books, laws, etc. Saying that logic is not important is like cutting off the branch we're sitting on. Our God is a God of order. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Corinthians 14:40)

When a church abandons logic it can lead to the introverted extremes of mysticism on one hand, or to the extroverted extremes of misused charismatic gifts on the other hand. The so called "Toronto Blessing" was a prime example of the latter. "Over and over again we are told by the likes of Rodney Howard Browne, 'turn off your mind,' 'get out of your head' and enter in.'" (Randles, 1995; 10) Pastor Bill Randles warns, "There is coming an abandonment of all that smacks of order, tradition, logic, and reason." (Randles, 1995; 134) When a society

abandons logic, the result is tragic in the injustices that are allowed. When logic and absolutes are set aside, the whims of dictators and a sentimental attachment to false ideas will rule instead. God's Word is the logical foundation that can bring life and truth to both the church and to society.

Lack of Evangelism

Coming back to the concept of the doldrums, some believers when spiritually bored, seek after counterfeit signs and wonders, or unbiblical mystical techniques for the sake of having exciting spiritual experiences. This however leaves them unguarded to spiritual pitfalls. Some of this spiritual boredom no doubt stems from the lack of evangelism in the lives of many Christians.

Some Christians seem to think that evangelism is only for "evangelists," but everyone would agree that the armor of God in Ephesians chapter 6 is for all Christians. That armor includes sharing the gospel: "...feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace..." (Ephesians 6:15) With our feet we "go" which is part of the commission Jesus gave to His disciples: "Go ye therefore..." (Matthew 28:19)

If you are a disciple, you are called to "go" and have your "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Also, in Matthew chapter 5, verse 9, Jesus said that the peacemakers are blessed. We can make peace in ordinary situations, but peacemaking that will have the biggest impact is peacemaking that brings peace between God and His enemies--those that are currently children of the devil. God wants to make peace with those people, and He wants to use Christians as His instruments.

When Jeremiah kept his mouth shut, he also experienced frustration. If he were unfaithful like the false prophets, he would have tried to have a counterfeit spirituality apart from proclaiming God's Word. "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." (Jeremiah 20:9)

When Christians evangelize, this also helps their prayer lives-- before evangelism we see our inability and seek for God's help; during evangelism we seek to be led by the Holy Spirit; and after evangelism we pray for the people that we shared the gospel with, and also come back to God's Word to learn how to answer questions and to share the gospel more accurately each time.

Removing evangelism from a Christian's life, removes part of God's armor, and is a sure way to put them in the spiritual doldrums or tempt them to seek after counterfeit experiences. Removing our role as "peacemakers" or redefining this word according to a social gospel, also deprives us of God's blessing promised in Matthew 5:9.

Also, evangelism is love in action-- bringing the gospel of peace to those who need it. Just as love, armor, blessings, and obeying the great commission are not a dispensable part of the Christian's life, so evangelism is not dispensable. Let us beseech people in love to be reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5:17-20).

Conclusion

Right now over a billion people in the world are Roman Catholics, which means about one in seven people in the world is Roman Catholic. Instead of equipping the saints to share the real gospel with them, many "evangelical" and "conservative" churches have made concessions to compromise with or to learn from Catholic writers and speakers. There are many good books of testimonies of former Catholic priests, nuns, and laypeople, as well as good books about witnessing to Roman Catholics, which we could be reading.

It is time to stop absorbing the traditions of men from Rome. It is time to be faithful to God's Word and let Him empower us to be His witnesses to a world going astray. This includes reaching the one in seven people of this world who hold to a bankrupt system of works salvation. What Paul said about the Jews in his day could equally well apply to Roman Catholics in our day. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness,

and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:3)

In part I of this book there was a chart showing the similarities in the anti-logical philosophies in mystical spirituality, in part II there was a chart showing the general similarities between Buddhist and Catholic spiritualities, and in part III a chart showing the similarities in their spiritual exercises. Whether it is an unbiblical abandonment of one's logic in favor of ecstatic experiences, unbiblical rituals, or unbiblical spiritual exercises, these three strikes against mysticism show that this pathway is the broad way that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13). Will you take a stand against compromise and stand for the truth, sharing about God's righteousness through Jesus Christ with those who need it?

Chapter 22

Some Thoughts on Biblical Prayer

When my father-in-law became a Christian at the age of 70, after spending a lifetime in Buddhism, his prayer life at first consisted of praying the "sinner's prayer" on the back of a gospel tract every day. A "sinner's prayer" on the back of a gospel tract is useful for someone who has never prayed before, to give a good example of what we should pray. But, once a person becomes a Christian and reads and understands the Bible, prayer should come from the person's heart as a natural expression of their relationship with God.

My father-in-law now understands this. The way he was raised in Buddhism, it was easy to misunderstand how to pray. As a Buddhist he was a chanting leader at his local temple, leading people in Pali language chanting, which many of the people chanting did not even understand, Thai being their native language. This kind of chanting is very common in Buddhism. It's not a relationship, but just saying the "right" formula.

Bunyan's Polemic Against Reciting Prayers

In the Anglican Church, The Book of Common Prayer is used, leading people in reciting prayers that are at least in their own language, but still which are not necessarily from their hearts. John Bunyan, who wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*, also wrote a short book against The Book of Common Prayer, which is called "I Will Pray With The Spirit And With The Understanding Also-- or A Discourse Touching Prayer." In that book are some good insights about prayer:

What Prayer Is

"By prayer the Christian can open his heart to God, as to a friend, and obtain fresh testimony of God's friendship to him.... Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God hath promised, or according to the Word, for the good of the church, with submission, in faith, to the will of God." (Bunyan, 4)

"For mark, I beseech you, there are two things that provoke to prayer. The one is a detestation to sin, and the things of this life; the other is a longing desire after communion with God, in a holy and undefiled state and inheritance." (Bunyan, 21)

Against False Prayer

"A good sense of sin, and the wrath of God, with some encouragement from God to come unto him, is a better Common-prayer-book than that which is taken out of the Papistical mass-book, being the scraps and fragments of the devices of some popes, some friars, and I wot not what.... All this is too, too evident by the ignorance, profaneness, and spirit of envy, that reign in the hearts of those men that are so hot for the forms, and not the power of praying. Scarce one of forty among them know what it is to be born again, to have communion with the Father through the Son; to feel the power of grace sanctifying their hearts: but for all their prayers, they still live cursed, drunken, whorish, and abominable lives, full of malice, envy, deceit, persecuting of the dear children of God. O what a dreadful after-clap is coming upon them! which all their hypocritical assembling themselves together, with all their prayers, shall never be able to help them against, or shelter them from." (Bunyan, 6)

J.C. Ryle Quote

The editor of John Bunyan's book also included a quote by J. C. Ryle about prayer in a footnote: "Jesus Christ has opened the way to God the Father, by the sacrifice He made for us upon the cross. The holiness and justice of God need not frighten sinners and keep them back. Only let them cry to God in the name of Jesus, only let them plead the atoning blood of Jesus, and they shall find God upon a throne of grace, willing and ready to hear. The name of Jesus is a never-failing passport to our prayers. In that name a man may draw near to God with boldness, and ask with confidence. God has engaged to hear him. Reader, think of this; is not this encouragement?" (Bunyan, 7)

Lip Labour or Spirit Led?

"For without a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart to God, it is but lip-labour; and if it be not through Christ, it falleth far short of ever sounding well in the ears of God. So also, if it be not in the strength and assistance of the Spirit, it is but like the sons of Aaron, offering with strange fire (Lev 10:1,2).... that which is not petitioned through the teaching and assistance of the Spirit, it is not possible that it should be 'according to *the will of God* (Rom 8:26,27).' (Bunyan, 8)

Formula Prayers

"But here now, the wise men of our days are so well skilled as that they have both the manner and matter of their prayers at their finger-ends; setting such a prayer for such a day, and that twenty years before it comes. One for Christmas, another for Easter, and six days after that. They have also bounded how many syllables must be said in every one of them at their public exercises. For each saint's day, also, they have them ready for the generations yet unborn to say. They can tell you, also, when you shall kneel, when you shall stand, when you should abide in your seats, when you should go up into the chancel, and what you should do when you come there. All which the apostles came short of, as not being able to compose so profound a manner; and that for this reason included in this scripture, because the fear of God tied them to pray as they ought." (Bunyan, 10)

The Pharisees Lacked the Help of the Holy Spirit

"For man, as man, is so full of all manner of wickedness, that as he cannot keep a word, or thought, so much less a piece of prayer clean, and acceptable to God through Christ; and for this cause the Pharisees, with their prayers, were rejected. No question but they were excellently able to express themselves in words, and also for length of time, too, they were very notable; but they had not the Spirit of Jesus Christ to help them, and therefore they did what they did with their infirmities or weaknesses only, and so fell short of a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of their souls to God, through the strength of the Spirit. That is the prayer that goeth to heaven, that is sent thither in the strength of the Spirit." (Bunyan, 11)

Bunyan's Own Weakness

"For, as for my heart, when I go to pray, I find it so loth to go to God, and when it is with him, so loth to stay with him, that many times I am forced in my prayers, first to beg of God that he would take mine heart, and set it on himself in Christ, and when it is there, that he would keep it there. Nay, many times I know not what to pray for, I am so blind, nor how to pray, I am so ignorant; only, blessed be grace, the Spirit helps our infirmities (Psa 86:11)." (Bunyan, 14)

Satan's Attempts to Discourage

"The people of God are not ignorant how many wiles, tricks, and temptations the devil hath to make a poor soul, who is truly willing to have the Lord Jesus Christ, and that upon Christ's terms too; I say, to tempt that soul to be weary of seeking the face of God, and to think that God is not willing to have mercy on such a one as him. Ay, saith Satan, thou mayest pray indeed, but thou shalt not prevail. Thou seest thine heart is hard, cold, dull, and dread; thou dost not pray with the Spirit, thou dost not pray in good earnest, thy thoughts are running after other things, when thou pretendest to pray to God. Away hypocrite, go no further, it is but in vain to strive any longer! Here now, if the soul be not well informed in its understanding, it will presently cry out, 'the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me' (Isa 49:14). Whereas the soul rightly informed and enlightened saith, Well, I will seek the Lord, and wait; I will not leave off, though the Lord keep silence, and speak not one word of comfort (Isa 40:27). He loved Jacob dearly, and yet he made him wrestle before he had the blessing (Gen 32:25-27). Seeming delays in God are no tokens of his displeasure; he may hide his face from his dearest saints (Isa 8:17)." (Bunyan, 18)

Teaching Children to Pray

"But if we do not use forms of prayer, how shall we teach our children to pray? *Answ.* My judgment is, that men go the wrong way to teach their children to pray, in going about so soon to teach them any set company of words, as is the common use of poor creatures to do. For to me it seems to be a better way for people betimes to tell their children what cursed creatures they are, and how they are under the wrath of God by

reason of original and actual sin; also to tell them the nature of God's wrath, and the duration of the misery; which if they conscientiously do, they would sooner teach their children to pray than they do. The way that men learn to pray, it is by conviction for sin; and this is the way to make our sweet babes do so too. But the other way, namely, to be busy in teaching children forms of prayer, before they know any thing else, it is the next way to make them cursed hypocrites, and to puff them up with pride. Teach therefore your children to know their wretched state and condition; tell them of hell-fire and their sins, of damnation, and salvation; the way to escape the one, and to enjoy the other, if you know it yourselves, and this will make tears run down your sweet babes' eyes, and hearty groans flow from their hearts; and then also you may tell them to whom they should pray, and through whom they should pray: you may tell them also of God's promises, and his former grace extended to sinners, according to the word. Ah! Poor sweet babes, the Lord open their eyes, and make them holy Christians. Saith David, 'Come ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord' (Psa 34:11). He doth not say, I will muzzle you up in a form of prayer; but 'I will teach you the fear of the Lord'; which is, to see their sad states by nature, and to be instructed in the truth of the gospel, which doth through the Spirit beget prayer in every one that in truth learns it. And the more you teach them this, the more will their hearts run out to God in prayer. God never did account Paul a praying man, until he was a convinced and converted man; no more will it be with any else (Acts 9:11)." (Bunyan, 19-20)

God's Throne of Grace

"If he had said, I will commune with thee from my throne of judgment, then indeed you might have trembled and fled from the face of the great and glorious Majesty. But when he saith he will hear and commune with souls upon the throne of grace, or from the mercyseat, this should encourage thee, and cause thee to hope, nay, to 'come boldly unto the throne of grace, that thou mayest obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need' (Heb 4:16)." (Bunyan, 24)

"Thou criest out that thou art vile, and therefore God will not regard

thy prayers; it is true, if thou delight in thy vileness, and come to God out of a mere pretence. But if from a sense of thy vileness thou do pour out thy heart to God, desiring to be saved from the guilt, and cleansed from the filth, with all thy heart; fear not, thy vileness will not cause the Lord to stop his ear from hearing of thee." (Bunyan, 24)

When Prayer is Neglected

"'Pour out thy fury upon the heathen,' O Lord, 'and upon the families that call not on thy name' (Jer 10:25). How likest thou this, O thou that art so far off from pouring out thine heart before God, that thou goest to bed like a dog, and risest like a hog, or a sot, and forgettest to call upon God? What wilt thou do when thou shalt be damned in hell, because thou couldst not find in thine heart to ask for heaven? Who will grieve for thy sorrow, that didst not count mercy worth asking for?" (Bunyan, 25)

The Traditions of the "Doctors"

"A very juggle of the devil, that the traditions of men should be of better esteem, and more to be owned than the Spirit of prayer. What is this less than that accursed abomination of Jeroboam, which kept many from going to Jerusalem, the place and way of God's appointment to worship.... Yet the doctors of our day are so far from taking of warning by the punishment of others, that they do most desperately rush into the same transgression, viz., to set up an institution of man, neither commanded nor commended of God; and whosoever will not obey herein, they must be driven either out of the land or the world." (Bunyan, 25-26)

Exhortation to Pray

"I shall not detain you any longer. Be sober and humble; go to the Father in the name of the Son, and tell him your case, in the assistance of the Spirit, and you will then feel the benefit of praying with the Spirit and with the understanding also." (Bunyan, 25)

John Bunyan's book about prayer can be found at...
(www.chapellibrary.org/johnbunyan/text/bun-prayer.pdf)

To Hear And To Be Heard

Biblical prayer is communicating with God. In the book of Psalms, David and the other psalmists often say "hear me when I call," "the Lord hath heard," "give ear," "the Lord will hear me," "give ear to my words," "hearken unto the voice of my cry," "hear my speech," "hear, O Lord," "Bow down thine ear to me," "His ears are open unto their cry," "thou wilt hear, O Lord my God," and other such phrases.

Their goal was not one of silencing the mind, but of using their minds to intelligibly speak with God. Jesus, being fully man also prayed, but being fully God and having perfect faith, he knew that He was heard. "...And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 11:41-42)

Also, regarding God hearing us, one of the psalmists said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Psalm 66:18) This is in agreement with what John in the New Testament said, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." (I John 3:22) Again, in the Old Testament, it is written, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

As imperfect humans we have a need to be heard, but we also need to hear God, which we do by reading the Bible, the words of the living God, and being led by His Holy Spirit. "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." (John 8:47) "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24)

If a person has only an intellectual acknowledgement of the Bible, this is not enough to become a Christian. Being a Christian means we have experienced God and have a relationship with Him (not only knowing about God, but actually knowing Him). But, in this relationship and experience we are never called on to abandon our logic. Jesus said, "...if a man love me, he will keep my words..." (John 14:23)

God has also given us the promise that He will hear us when we ask according to His will. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (I John 5:14-15)

Poured Out

In addition to being heard, another theme that is repeated in the Bible regarding prayer is "pouring out" our prayers. Again, it is not a silent endeavor as some of the mystics emphasize, but real communication. This does not mean that we have to talk non-stop. Just as in a conversation with a friend, there may be a pause in the conversation and there are times when we listen also, even so when we pray to God there may be times of silence and listening. But this is not a mystical silence of getting beyond words and beyond logic. God is willing to listen to us as the psalms repeatedly state. We pour out our prayers to God knowing that He will answer us when we pray biblically.

"And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD." (1Samuel 1:15)

"For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters." (Job 3:24)

"Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah." (Psalm 62:8)

"A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD. Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee." (Psalm 102:1)

"I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble." (Psalm 142:2)

"LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them." (Isaiah 26:16)

"Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street." (Lamentations 2:19)

Wait

Living in an age of instant noodles, instant rebates, and instant coffee; and where almost everything else is supposed to be high speed too, it's hard for us to stop and wait sometimes. Waiting is a common theme in the Bible though. The Apostles had to wait for ten days before receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, although afterwards others received the Holy Spirit instantly, such as in Acts chapters eight and ten. One time Jeremiah had to wait for ten days for the word of the Lord (Jeremiah 42:7). We do not always get instant answers.

Waiting can be pretty boring. I usually take a book along to stay occupied if I know I'll need to wait for something or someone. It is good to redeem the time like this, but sometimes I'm too much oriented towards accomplishing something, rather than just enjoying fellowship with God. I need to recognize more the value of just fellowshiping with God, even though this is not something that can be quantified and it may be difficult to see immediate results from time in prayer. Some people try to quantify prayer by allotting a certain number of hours or minutes to time with God, but this is also fleshly.

The flesh loves formulas and ceremonies. The flesh loves to say a hundred repetitions of a "holy phrase," or spend X number of days fasting while reciting the book psalms X number of times, or visualize gospel scenes, or follow the formula of purgation, illumination and union-- these are religious and mystical attempts to accomplish something by the strength of our own flesh. Our relationship with God, is one that we delight in-- the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but we also love God, not seeking to impress Him with our accomplishments, but simply trusting that by His grace we are accepted (Ephesians 1:6) and can enjoy a relationship with Him as His children.

Waiting also involves trust-- if we're waiting for a friend who is late we trust that person has a good reason for being late. When we wait for God, He is never "late," but He has good reasons for letting us wait. We trust in His wisdom and timing in our situations. Here are some Bible verses which exhort us to wait:

"Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.... Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." (Psalm 25:3,5)

"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD." (Psalm 27:14)

"Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.... For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." (Psalm 37:7,9)

"To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." (Psalm 40:1)

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." (Psalm 62:5)

"I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope....

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning:
I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5-6)

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

Seeking God

The mystics and some extreme Pentecostals seek after an experience rather than seeking God. Even though they may claim they are seeking God, they have added to and taken away from His Word thus ending up with their own definition of God.

Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) Those people were not worshipping Baal, or some false deity. They were worshipping God with their mouths, but Jesus said they did so "in vain." In this case they had added to the Word of God from their own doctrines, thus ending up with vain worship. Attempting to seek God or worship God while at the same time adding to or taking away from God's Word as the mystics and others do, results in vanity.

We cannot separate God from His Word. Jesus is the Word. Jesus said that it was an evil generation that sought after "a sign."

"And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet." (Luke 11:29)

Instead of seeking a sign or an experience, we are exhorted to seek a relationship with God. We are promised a reward in so doing, but we are not supposed to seek the reward, but to seek God Himself.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)

The theme of seeking God is repeated frequently in the Bible:

"And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." (Psalm 9:10)

"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." (Psalm 10:4)

"The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever." (Psalm 22:26)

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.... When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek." (Psa 27:4,8)

"Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified." (Psalm 40:16)

"A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." (Psalm 63:1)

"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. " (Psalm 119:2)

Horatius Bonar's Exhortation to Believing Prayer

Scottish pastor Horatius Bonar reminds us of the importance of knowing God's character (which we know from His Word), thus encouraging us to pray expectantly and believingly: "The sinfulness of non-expecting prayer. The utterance of petitions is nothing to God; it does not recommend the petitioner. Many seem to think so; and to suppose there is some secret virtue or influence, if not merit, in all prayer, however

unbelieving. It is not so; nay, there is guilt, deep guilt, in every unbelieving petition; for thus God is dishonored, His willingness is denied, His Son is set aside, His Spirit is grieved, and He is addressed both as an hard master and an unknown God. Oh the guilt involved in the religion of religious men; men whose prayers are as regular as the rising or setting sun!" (www.chapellibrary.org/files/8413/7643/3315/poap.pdf)

Rosalind Goforth's Lists

In Rosalind Goforth's book "How I know God Answers Prayer" she gave many encouraging testimonies of how God answered her and her husband Jonathan's prayers. Towards the end of the book she also gave the following helpful lists to check if our prayers are biblical. Goforth wrote, "In recent years I have often tested myself by these conditions, when weeks, and perhaps months, have passed without some answer to prayer, and there has come a conscious spiritual sagging. As the discerning soul can plainly see, all the conditions mentioned in the list below may be included in the one word 'Abide.'

Conditions of Prevailing Prayer

1. Contrite humility before God and forsaking of sin.--2 Chron. 7:14.
2. Seeking God with the whole heart.--Jer. 29:12, 13.
3. Faith in God.--Mark 11:23, 24.
4. Obedience.--1 John 3:22.
5. Dependence on the Holy Spirit.--Rom. 8:26.
6. Importunity.--Mark 7:24-30; Luke 11:5-10.
7. Must ask in accordance with God's will.--1 John 5:14.
8. In Christ's Name.--John 14:13, 14, and many other passages.
9. Must be willing to make amends for wrongs to others.--Matt. 5:23, 24.

Causes of Failure in Prayer

1. Sin in the heart and life.--Psa. 66:18; Isa. 59:1, 2.
2. Persistent refusal to obey God.--Prov. 1:24-28; Zech. 7:11, 13.
3. Formalism and hypocrisy.--Isa. 1:2-15.
4. Unwillingness to forgive others.--Mark 11:25, 26.
5. Wrong motives.--James 4:2, 3.
6. Despising God's law.--Amos 2:4.
7. Lack of love and mercy.--Prov. 21:13." (Goforth, 72-73)

There's much more that could be said about prayer and I still have a lot more to learn about prayer. We learn from God's Word and with the help of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised Christians that He would never leave us nor forsake us. So we should consider that we can pray anytime and wherever we are. Every aspect of our lives is related to how we pray and God is continually teaching us.

A friend once told me that maintaining a good marriage is like maintaining a good garden-- we need to spend time taking out the weeds, planting good seeds, watering them, etc. Our relationship with God also requires spending time with Him, repenting of our sins, planting the good seed of His Word, and allowing Him to water this seed so we can have fruitful and healthy communication with God-- seeking Him and worshipping Him in spirit and in truth. Our prayer life should be in spirit-- not after the ways of the flesh nor the traditions of men, and in truth-- according to His Holy Word.

Chapter 23

Chart # 4- Mystical Concepts in Prayer Compared With Biblical Prayer

Mystical Concepts in Prayer	Biblical Prayer
-Using repetitions and breath prayers -God is distant and impersonal (apophatic theology) -Visualizations -Seeking after extra-biblical experiences -Silent Prayers -Going beyond thoughts -Communicating with the dead -Going beyond any physical sensations -Taking on false identities, such as being the personal bride of Christ, and other false identities through visualization -Losing control of one's self and being passively detached -Using the Bible not for its content, but ritualistically to achieve an altered state of consciousness -Using images, idols, candles, rosaries, holy water, etc. -Sleep, death, and drunkenness are common metaphors used for contemplative prayer -Going beyond the normal use of the senses: either in complete deprivation or in indulging the	-Praying communicatively -God is personal and approachable -Walking by faith -Being satisfied with God's Word -Praying with words -Honoring God with our thoughts -Praying only to God -Praying with an awareness of our surroundings -Finding our identity in being the children of God, saved by Jesus Christ -The fruit of the Holy Spirit includes self-control -Using the Bible to learn from God -No need for any ritualistic objects -The Bible calls us to "watch" and pray, with soberness, being fully awake and aware -The biblical approach is to have a balanced view of the senses--not becoming an ascetic, and not

senses with visualization-- both for the sake of achieving ecstatic experiences -A one-pointed concentration gazing on "God's" presence, without using any words; also gazing at images and the Eucharist -Abandonment of logic and rationality	chasing after experiences, but rather seeking God -Not focusing on a "feeling" of God's presence, but trusting His promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5), and communicating with God verbally -The Bible promotes logic and praying with understanding
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Appendix 1

Logic: A Gift From God Not To Be Thrown Out The Window

Famous hymn writer Isaac Watts also wrote a book about Logic. In this book he said, "The power of reasoning was given us by our Maker, for this very end, to pursue truth; and we abuse one of his richest gifts, if we basely yield up to be led astray by any of the meaner powers of nature, or the perishing interests of this life. Reason itself, if honestly obeyed, will lead us to receive the divine revelation of the gospel, where it is duly proposed, and this will show us the path to life everlasting." (Watts, 325)

Whether we think about it or not, our view of logic affects all of us. The mystics despise logic. As a result, they drift far from God's Word. Others have used logic to justify false ideas, like a hammer being used to destroy instead of to build. The fact that logic can be misused does not mean it should be thrown out the window. Logic is a gift given to us by God. It is so basic and so essential that we could not make any distinctions at all without it. We could not say that some things are wrong and some things are right, without using the basic laws of logic. We could not communicate or understand God's Word without logic.

Even people who are against logic must use logic in order to make known their opposition, thus contradicting themselves. Without logic a person could write something like, "If the if yes no yes no could if could if yes no yes no." If logic does not apply, then morality, communication, discernment, and even the possibility of science are voided. Politics, economics, medicine, theology and every other subject is also affected when logic is thrown out the window.

The Catholic mystics add to and take away from God's Word in many ways. One of these ways is through their disdain for logic. As will become clear later in this appendix, logic is a central feature in the Bible and is central to the Christian worldview. Before talking about that

though, I would like to look at a few examples from history related to logic.

Historical Examples Related to Logic

Aristotle (384-322 BC) is famous for articulating some of the basic laws of logic, but he was not the inventor of logic-- merely a discoverer. J. Warner Wallace, who was an atheist for 35 years, but who is now a defender of the Christian faith, wrote, "God did not *create* the Laws of Logic. These laws are simply a reflection of the thoughts and logical character of God, and as such, they reveal His logical, perfect nature." ([www.str.org/blog/is-god-real-are-the-laws-of-logic-simply-human-convention s#.U42KQVdIPYg](http://www.str.org/blog/is-god-real-are-the-laws-of-logic-simply-human-convention-s#.U42KQVdIPYg)) One example of the Laws of Logic being a reflection of God's nature is the fact that God cannot lie: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." (Titus 1:2) This is in agreement with the Law of Non-Contradiction and also the Law of Identity, which we'll look at later. Looking back at his life, Wallace wrote, "When I used to argue against the existence of God, I employed Laws of Logic my atheistic worldview could not provide. I had to *borrow* these concepts from the very worldview I was trying to defeat. Today, as a theist, I have an adequate foundation for these logical axioms. I can respond to objections in a way that is consistent with my worldview." ([www.str.org/blog/ is-god-real-are-the-laws-of-logic-simply-human-conventions#.U42KQVdIPYg](http://www.str.org/blog/is-god-real-are-the-laws-of-logic-simply-human-conventions#.U42KQVdIPYg))

Georg W. F. Hegel (AD 1770-1831): A Synthesis of Opposites
Georg Hegel was a German philosopher and a critic of traditional Christian ideas. Concerning Hegel, Christian philosopher Francis Schaeffer in his book "Escape From Reason," wrote, "[Hegel] opened the door to that which is characteristic of modern man. Truth as truth is gone and synthesis (the both-and), with its relativism, reigns." (Schaeffer, 1968; 41-42) In his book "He Is There And He Is Not Silent", Schaeffer wrote, "...the method of epistemology [the study of knowledge] had always been antithesis. That is, you learn by saying 'a' is not 'non-a'. That is the first step in classical logic. In other words, in antithesis if this is true then its opposite is not true.... But Hegel argued that antithesis has never turned out well on a rationalistic basis, so he

proposed to change the methodology of epistemology. Instead of dealing with antithesis, let us deal with synthesis.... turning the whole theory of knowledge upside down." (Shaeffer, 1972; 53-54)

Karl Marx (AD 1818-1883), Multiple Logics, and Nazi Germany
Karl Marx, the man behind the Communist ideology, studied Hegel's ideas and held to the concept of polylogisms (though he didn't call it that-- the term "polylogism" was coined later by Ludwig von Mises), which is a non-sensical concept advocating different kinds of logic. Austrian economic theorist and prolific author Ludwig von Mises, explains how Karl Marx and his followers sidestepped logic in order to implement their political and economic goals: "All human interrelations are based on this assumption of a uniform logical structure. We can speak to each other only because we can appeal to something common to all of us, namely, the logical structure of reason.... Marx and the Marxians, foremost among them the 'proletarian philosopher' Dietzgen, taught that thought is determined by the thinker's class position. What thinking produces is not truth but 'ideologies'.... It is therefore useless to discuss anything with people of another social class. Ideologies do not need to be refuted by discursive reasoning; they must be *unmasked* by denouncing the class position, the social background, of their authors.... The Marxians have resorted to polylogism because they could not refute by logical methods the theories developed by 'bourgeois' economics, or the inferences drawn from these theories demonstrating the impracticability of socialism. As they could not rationally demonstrate the soundness of their own ideas or the unsoundness of their adversaries' ideas, they have denounced the accepted logical methods. The success of this Marxian stratagem was unprecedented." (mises.org/daily/1457/ What-the-Nazis-Borrowed-from-Marx) This "success" for their ideology (achieved by throwing logic out the window) was a tragedy in the lives of many who had to live in oppressive communist and socialist countries.

Mises also pointed out how the Nazis in Germany also made use of this idea of multiple "logics": "The German nationalists had to face precisely the same problem as the Marxians. They also could neither

demonstrate the correctness of their own statements nor disprove the theories of economics and praxeology. Thus they took shelter under the roof of polylogism, prepared for them by the Marxians. Of course, they concocted their own brand of polylogism. The logical structure of mind, they say, is different with different nations and races. Every race or nation has its own logic and therefore its own economics, mathematics, physics, and so on.... Neither Marxian nor Nazi polylogism ever went further than to declare that the logical structure of mind is different with various classes or races. They never ventured to demonstrate precisely in what the logic of the proletarians differs from the logic of the bourgeois, or in what the logic of the Aryans differs from the logic of the Jews or the British.... Polylogism is not a philosophy or an epistemological theory. It is an attitude of narrow-minded fanatics, who cannot imagine that anybody could be more reasonable or more clever than they themselves. Nor is polylogism scientific. It is rather the replacement of reasoning and science by superstitions. It is the characteristic mentality of an age of chaos." (mises.org/daily/1457/What-the-Nazis-Borrowed-from-Marx) Like the communist countries, Germany also suffered from not being allowed to defend or refute ideologies using classical logic.

Søren Kierkegaard (AD 1813-1855) and Karl Barth (AD 1886-1968) Karl Barth, the Swiss theologian, was very much influenced by Søren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher. Francis Schaeffer, writing about Barth's theology, explains its connection to Kierkegaard's leap away from logic, "Religious truth is separated from the historical truth of the Scriptures. Thus there is no place for reason and there is no point of verification.... in this system is the constant appearance in one form or another of the Kierkegaardian emphasis on the necessity of the leap. Because the rational and logical are totally separated from the non-rational and the non-logical, the leap is total. Faith, whether expressed in secular or religious terms, becomes a leap without any verification because it is totally separated from the logical and the reasonable." (Schaeffer, 1968; 51-52)

Pastor and Bible professor David Kowalski wrote, "I think Kant was a pivotal figure in separating *noumena* and *phenomena*, but Kierkegaard

kicked that can further down the road, officially separating revelation from reason.... What matters to Kierkegaard is not what one believes, but how passionately one believes it and how fervently one acts upon it. He advises a leap of "faith" (a kind of fairy tale belief) that has as little as possible to do with evidence or reason.... For the Kierkegaardian existentialist, revelation is experience only and at least theoretically non-communicable.... The death of God theologians claimed they were only taking Barthianism (which is essentially Kierkegaardiansim) to its logical conclusions." ([www.apologetics index.org/3133-truth-events](http://www.apologeticsindex.org/3133-truth-events)) Downplaying logic inevitably leads to the exaltation of experiences and feelings without regard to whether those experiences or feelings are anchored in biblical truth or not. This can be seen in extroverted and extreme pentecostal experiences on the one hand and in introverted and mystical experiences on the other hand. Jesus said, "...If a man love me, he will keep my words..." (John 14:23)

Kowalski also wrote, "Barth is 'in,' and his thinking blends well with postmodern theology which denies the existence of absolute, objective truth.... Everything Karl Barth said or wrote about Christian theology must be understood to exist in the mysterious world of the 'Neo-Orthodox Triangle'-- the intellectual equivalent of the Bermuda Triangle. Ordinary laws of thinking do not apply in the Neo-Orthodox Triangle. Cardinal truths fly into the triangle and are never seen again. Biblical, Christian faith becomes mysteriously shipwrecked in the triangle. The three sides of the triangle are Barth's views on God, revelation, and history.... For Barth, theology cannot be reduced to the categories of true or false-- theology exists within the realm between the two in which nonsense is considered good teaching." ([www.apologeticsindex.org /2838-plain-talk-on-karl-barth](http://www.apologeticsindex.org/2838-plain-talk-on-karl-barth))

Science and Logic

Francis Schaeffer points to the Christian worldview as promoting scientific inquiry, "The early scientists also shared the outlook of Christianity in believing that there is a reasonable God, who had created a reasonable universe, and thus man, by use of his reason, could find out the universe's form." (Schaeffer, 1968; 31)

Christian philosopher Vishal Mangalwadi, who is from India wrote, "The fact is that the Hindu doctrine of Maya-- that the material universe is somehow unreal-- and its corollary-- non-rational mysticism-- destroyed the very foundations of science and learning in India." (Mangalwadi, 111)

Mangalwadi also wrote, "Scientism [believing that rationality is not behind the universe, but that it is an accident of nature-- and yet using human reason to try to understand the universe] has failed to provide a satisfying philosophy of science, and mysticism is a blind alley which destroys the possibility of science. However, it is possible to go back to the original assumption of the founders of modern science, that the world is comprehensible by human reason because it is created by a rational Being who has also created us in his own image to govern the earth." (www.karma2grace.org/page.asp?pg=74)

Concerning modern discoveries which supposedly disprove that our universe is logical, Mangalwadi wrote, "The paradox of light appearing both as a particle and as a wave does not imply that the law of non-contradiction is invalid, that an apple can also be a banana. The fact is that light is neither a particle nor a wave. It is something for which we have no parallel in the macroscopic world, therefore we tend to describe its space dimension as a particle and its time dimension as a wave. Physicists now prefer to call it a wavicle - a name which means nothing concrete to us, because it has no parallel in our macroscopic experience. But it establishes a principle that if at present our language does not adequately describe a particular reality, what we need is not to abolish language, but to coin a new word or phrase. Likewise, the 'uncertainty' of the behaviour of the electrons [Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle] is because there are no 'local' hidden variables or causes. It does not prove that there are no 'non-local' hidden causes which could explain the behaviour." (www.karma2grace.org/page.asp?pg=74)

Is Logic Invalid In the Oriental Hemisphere?

Medical doctor Nishanth Arulappan, who is from India wrote, "The reason Indian philosophy is considered to be mysterious and enchanting

is because it *tolerated* contradictions, despite *recognizing* them.... Logic is the same for both groups. What is a contradiction in the West is a contradiction in the East.... the law of non-contradiction is unavoidable. There is no “both-and” anywhere in the universe." (www.biblicalphilosophy.org/Logic/Logic_East_West_Nishanth.asp)

Vishal Mangalwadi pointed out, "It is easy for Swami Ranganatha to say, 'If facts do not fit logic, it is logic that has to go.' The question is, however, how do we know what the facts are? Whatever his other mistakes, Kant was right in his insistence that logic is a priori. If we cannot assume the validity of logic, we cannot know any facts." (www.karma2grace.org/page.asp?pg=74)

Dr. Avi Sion, although a defender of Buddhism, wrote the book "Buddhist Illogic" focusing on Nagarjuna's errors [AD ca. 150-250]. Nagarjuna was one of the key figures in Mahayana Buddhism. Sion wrote, "The way offered by Nagarjuna is unconvincing to anyone with high standards of knowledge; it is merely a malicious parody of logic. What revolts me here is the shameless sophistry engaged in by Nagarjuna, in his impossible attempts to give logical legitimacy to his anti-logical ideas. (See Appendix 1 for a list of fallacies he uses repeatedly.) If someone sincerely believes that no words have true significance, would he write his skeptical words and expect others to understand them?... Like many Western skeptics, Nagarjuna does not take the trouble to harmonize his words and deeds, testing his thoughts on his own thinking; if knowingly indulged, this is hypocrisy. Like many religious apologists, Nagarjuna considers logic, not as a tool of research and discovery, but as a weapon of rhetoric in defense of preconceived ideas; if knowingly indulged, this is cheating. (Sion, 100-101)

Dr. Avi Sion summarized Nagarjuna's thoughts: "In sum, though he gives the illusion that it is reasonable to abandon reason, it is easy to see that his conclusion is foregone and his means are faulty." (Sion, 9)

To this day, Nagarjuna is held in high esteem among many of the Mahayana schools of Buddhism. Others who followed in Nagarjuna's

footsteps made similar illogical claims, such as Candrakirti:
"Candrakirti (circa seventh century C.E.) then criticized Bhavaviveka's use of logic to arrive at positive truths, maintaining that the only proper 'empty' use of logic was, to reduce one's opponent's positions to absurdity, without taking a positive position oneself." (Robinson, 89)

In Hinduism, logic is also downplayed, as Mangalwadi shows, "It is true that Vedanta [one of the Hindu philosophies] teaches categorically that dependence on the senses and logic has to be discarded if we want to know the true nature of the universe. In his authoritative work Bliss Divine, Swami Sivananda states unequivocally that the vedantic view is that we must seek to 'consciously destroy the mind by Sadhna and Samadhi.' And again: 'Do not use your reason too much in the selection of your Guru;' 'Keep your intellect at a respectable distance when you study mythology. Intellect is a hindrance;' 'That which separates you from God [Brahma] is mind.'" (www.karma2grace.org/page.asp?pg=74)

In some forms of eastern thought, it is said that something can be true and false at the same time and in the same sense. In that case the opposite meaning of the previous sentence would also be true, so that every sentence could falsify itself, and we would end up with no meaningful communication at all. This is self-defeating and vain talk, which doesn't correspond to the real world. In the real world something either is alive, or it's not; somebody is absent, or they are present, etc.

Mangalwadi compares the Buddhist starting point and the biblical starting point: "...Buddhism started with the assumption that both physical reality and human rationality are products of Ignorance (*Avidya*). Therefore, the enlightenment it sought was to transcend rationality by altering consciousness and finding mystical knowledge and occult power.... Why did the Judeo-Christian tradition use rationality and creativity (instead of mysticism and 'transcendental' meditation) to lead the fight against suffering, against the violation of human liberty and dignity? The answer is: the Bible begins with an assumption that is opposite to Gnosticism and Buddhism." (Mangalwadi, 123-124)

What results can be seen from India's spiritual worldview? Mangalwadi sums it up with this sobering list: "Asceticism, untouchability, mysticism, the occult, superstition, idolatry, witchcraft, and oppressive beliefs and practices became the hallmark of Indian culture."

(Mangalwadi, 153) Mangalwadi also gives this somber warning: "We in India will condemn ourselves to a few more generations of ignorance, perversion, exploitation, and slavery if once again we turn *en masse* to a failed mysticism." (Mangalwadi, 142) This should also be a warning for every Christian who is tempted to dabble in mystical practices.

Is God's Logic Different From Human Logic?

Sometimes the assertion is made that in the Bible or in the spiritual realm a different kind of logic is being used. To make that assertion is to completely misunderstand what logic is. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). Speaking the truth implies using the Laws of Logic. The Bible, being God's Word is also logical and true.

God's ways are higher than our ways, but God and His Word are not illogical, or "beyond logic" as some mystics have claimed. If someone says a Bible passage "seems" or "appears" illogical, this is understandable, because all of us have limited knowledge. But, to say that a passage "is" illogical falls into problems. It presumes that we completely understand the passage or the idea, to where we can stand in judgment over God's Word to say definitively that it is illogical. There are many good books which explain supposed biblical contradictions, showing the false assumptions which the accusers make. Not understanding is one thing. Judging God or His Word as illogical is another. The laws of logic are not optional.

David Kowalski gives an example showing the absurdity of assigning to God a different kind of logic: "Though no one would deny that God is beyond our comprehension, it is problematic to imagine a different kind of logic in God-- one, for example, in which 2+2 does *not* equal 4." (www.apologeticsindex.org/3135-the-perplexing-paradox-problem)

Gordon Clark, chairman of the Philosophy Department of Butler University for 28 years, wrote, "Of course, the Scripture says that God's thoughts are not our thoughts and his ways are not our ways. But is it good exegesis to say that this means his logic, his arithmetic, his truth are not ours? If this were so, what would the consequences be? It would mean not only that our additions and subtractions are all wrong, but also that all our thoughts-- in history as well as in arithmetic-- are all wrong. If for example, we think that David was King of Israel, and God's thoughts are not ours, then it follows that God does not think David was King of Israel. David in God's mind was perchance prime minister of Babylon. To avoid this irrationalism, which of course is a denial of the divine image, we must insist that truth is the same for God and man." (www.trinityfoundation.org/journal.php?id=16)

Gordon Clark also gave a good summary of the qualities of logic: "Logic is fixed, universal, necessary, and irreplaceable. Irrationality contradicts the Biblical teaching from beginning to end." (www.trinityfoundation.org/journal.php?id=16)

Charles Hodge, principal of Princeton Theological Seminary for over 25 years, wrote, "Nothing, therefore, can be more derogatory to the Bible than the assertion that its doctrines are contrary to reason. The assumption that reason and faith are incompatible; that we must become irrational in order to become believers is, however it may be intended, the language of infidelity; for faith in the irrational is of necessity itself irrational...." (thecollegeoftheology.com/god-and-logic)

Craig Hawkins, philosophy professor and Christian apologist illustrates his points about logic well: "...one cannot *not* use logic in the real world. Try driving to the grocery store while denying the validity of logic. (Indeed, what grocery store? The one that is and is not there?) One can not successfully cross the railroad tracks without it. Next time you're at a railroad crossing with an apparent train speeding down the line imagine thinking that the train is there and it is not there. Would you? No! Try this in the 'real' world. (Why do Hindus and Christian Scientists look both ways before crossing the street?) Logic is necessary or

indispensable in life. One literally can not live (long) without it!.... One cannot even cross the street, let alone the metaphysical [dealing with things beyond the physical realm] highway without using logic." (thecollegeoftheology.com/god-and-logic/)

In conclusion, Dr. John Robbins, founder of the Trinity Foundation, wrote, "God is a rational being, and man, his image, is also rational. God was not joking or waxing metaphorical when he invited sinners, through Isaiah, 'Come, let us reason together.' Because man is God's image, his logic is God's logic, and God and man can reason together. God's truth and man's truth are not two different truths; the concept of twofold truth, in which one thing can be true in theology and its contradictory true in philosophy, or in which two contradictories can both be true in theology, is medieval and modern Antichristian nonsense. God's logic and man's logic are not two different logics; the notion of polylogism-- many logics-- is nonsense." (www.trinityfoundation.org/journal.php?id=290)

Postmodernism

Dr. Paul Copan, Chair of Philosophy and Ethics at Palm Beach Atlantic University, gives a general timeframe for the ideas of modernism and postmodernism: "If the French Revolution and the storming of the Bastille in Paris (1789) stands as a picture of the shift to modernism, the fall of the Berlin Wall exactly 200 years later (1989) symbolizes the failure of modernism and rise of postmodernism." (www.4truth.net/fourtruthpbnew.aspx?pageid=8589952823)

Dr. Paul Copan defines modernism and postmodernism as follows:

"Modernists attempted to create 'grand stories'-- without reference to God-- to ground human dignity, freedom, morality, and progress."

"...with postmodernism, not only was *God* excluded as a foundation for making sense of reality and human experience; we cannot speak of any universal truth, reason, or morality. We just have fragmented perspectives."

Vishal Mangalwadi summarizes some similarities between Hinduism and postmodernism: "Both postmodern secularism and traditional

Hinduism believe that human reason is incapable of knowing objective truth and morality. They also preclude the possibility of an infinite, personal God who exists, who knows the truth, and can reveal it to human beings in rational language." (Mangalwadi, 107)

Many of the mystics want to bypass the mind, and bypass rationality, which many of them even explicitly state. This is a problem, because on one hand it undermines a rational understanding of the Bible, opening it to any "secret meaning" or Gnostic understanding of the Bible. On the other hand, if logic does not apply, then anything goes-- all religions would be the same, and all would lead to the same place, etc. People could claim anything, because they no longer would have to defend it logically-- that is postmodernism.

Christian philosophy professor and accomplished debater Dr. William Lane Craig thinks that postmodernism as a philosophy is doomed, saying, "After all, nobody adopts a Post-Modernist view of literary texts when reading the labels on a medicine bottle or a box of rat poison! Clearly, we ignore the objective meaning of such texts only at peril to our lives.... Indeed, in philosophy Post-Modernism is really a rather marginal movement, being ensconced principally in departments of English, literature, and education, rather than in philosophy." ([www.reasonablefaith.org /the-revolution-in-anglo-american-philosophy](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/the-revolution-in-anglo-american-philosophy)) There are many schools of thought which throw logic out the window. Postmodernism is one and mysticism is another. As Christians we recognize that logic is a gift given to us by God, to be received with thanksgiving and used for His glory.

Words Related to Logic in the Bible

Here are two verses in the Old Testament which point to the importance of using "reason." "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." (Proverbs 26:16) "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18)

In the New Testament, the Greek word "logos," is used (meaning "word" or "reason"), from which the English word "logic" is derived. Listed below are a number of New Testament verses which use various forms of the word "logos." After the headings of the related Greek words, are verses from the King James Version, with the corresponding English words underlined.

"logos": "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." (Matthew 5:32) "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matthew 12:36) "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35) "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them." (Matthew 25:19) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1) "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach..." (Acts 1:1) "But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3:15)

"ellogeo": "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." (Romans 5:13)

"logizomai": "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Romans 3:28) "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

"analogizomai" ("ana" means "again," as in "Anabaptist"- to baptize again): "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Hebrews 12:3)

"logikos": "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (I Peter 2:2)

"dialegomai" ("lego" is the Greek word from which "logos" is derived): "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures." (Acts 17:2) "Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. (Acts 17:17) "And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." (Acts 18:4) "And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews." (Acts 18:19)

In these various words related to "logos" we get the following English words: cause, account, word, reckon, treatise, reason, disputed, reasoned, imputed, conclude, think, consider, and reasonable. These words are very much related to rational thought, reasoning ability, and logic.

Negative Meanings

"antilogia": "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Hebrews 12:3) "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." (Jude 1:11)

"alogos": "For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him." (Acts 25:27) "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption." (2 Peter 2:12) "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves." (Jude 1:10)

"anapologetos" ("an" means "not," as in "anarchy" - not with authority): "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." (Romans 1:20)

Day to day communication is based on logic, just as God's Word is based on logic. In prayer, we also need to "love the Lord our God with all of our minds," using real communication, not altered states of slumber, inebriation, or going into a "realm" of "alogos." The mystics try to say that God is "beyond logic" or "illogical" as if logic does not apply in some realms. It is false and absurd to say that truth does not apply in the spiritual realm. The wisdom of God may seem like foolishness to people, but that is because of our limited perspective. God who cannot lie, and who is the God of truth, is eminently logical. To ascribe "alogos" to God is a terrible insult.

God sent His "logos" (Jesus) into the world to communicate with us. If we have a real relationship with God, we will also communicate with Him through prayer, which is in agreement with His Word. To bypass His Word is to bypass logic and bypass our minds which he gave us. The King James Version translates the word "alogos" as "brute" or "unreasonable" in Acts, 2 Peter and in Jude. Let us not be brutish or unreasonable, but rather, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word [logikos], that ye may grow thereby." (I Peter 2:2)

Apologetics

The word "apologetics" in English, meaning to give a defense, comes from two words in Greek: "apo" meaning "from," "of," or "by,"; and "logia" related to "logos." So, to give a defense it must be "by logic."

"apologia": "Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you." (Acts 22:1) "Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace." (Philippians 1:7) "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that

asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."
(I Peter 3:15)

"apologeomai": "While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all." (Acts 25:8) "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself." (Acts 26:1)

The Four Primary Laws of Logic

1. The law of (non-) contradiction. It states that no statement (proposition, assertion, etc.) can be both true and not true-- false-- (e.g., A cannot be non-A) at the same time and in the same sense.
 2. The law of excluded middle states "A or non-A," that is, a proposition or statement is either true or false-- it must be one or the other.
 3. The law of identity. It states that $A=A$.
 4. The law of logical or rational inference. An example of it or one way it is expressed is: "if $A=B$, and $B=C$, then $A=C$."
- (Adapted from Craig Hawkins... thecollegeoftheology.com/god-and-logic/)

The Four Laws of Logic in the Bible

1. The law of non-contradiction. In Thailand (and elsewhere) some people like to say that "all religions are the same." But, this does not take into account all of the contradictory beliefs. Some people say that Biblical Christianity and Roman Catholicism are the same, but again, this ignores the many contradictions. Paul spoke clearly about those who preached "another Jesus" or "another gospel" identifying this as different and corrupt, (2 Corinthians 11:3) and making use of the law of non-contradiction. Although using the name of Jesus, their preaching contradicted what Paul had specifically preached about Jesus and the gospel. "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." (2 Corinthians 11:4)

2. The law of excluded middle. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) There is no alternative choice here-- if a person is not born again, they cannot see the kingdom of God. Either a person is a Christian, or is not.

3. The law of identity. In the book of Isaiah we see the importance in God's Word of correctly identifying "good" and "evil." Isaiah rebuked those who misidentified these things. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20)

4. The law of logical or rational inference. There is only one Saviour, and this Saviour is God. "I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no Saviour." (Isaiah 43:11) "...there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:21b-22) From these verses we could say God=Saviour (A=B). But, in the New Testament, many verses call Jesus the Saviour, such as the following one in Luke: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11) From these verses we see that Saviour=Jesus (B=C). And, this brings us to the logical conclusion that Jesus=God (A=C). Of course, many other verses support this, some stating it plainly (John 1:1,14; John 20:28; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 1:8, I Timothy 3:16).

Reason Submitted to God's Word

Not all reasoning is good reasoning. Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) In the following example, we see the disciples of Jesus using their reasoning and their thoughts for a selfish purpose: "dialogismos": "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him." (Luke 9:46-47)

Human reasoning that is not submitted to God's Word is a pathway to sin. When mystics abandon their God-given reasoning abilities, this is also a pathway to sin. But, when our reasoning is submitted to God, we are ready to let God teach us through His Word. This does not mean we will understand everything. There are mysteries in God's Word that we don't understand, but this is not because those are illogical things, but because we have limited knowledge and walk by faith now. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (I Corinthians 13:12-13)

Emergent and Mystical Common Ground

In a critique of Brian McLaren, emergent church leader, Bob DeWaay gives some background regarding the common ground the emergent church has with mysticism. "According to [Francis] Schaeffer, the true fool's mission is 'escape from reason,' the title of one of his books. Schaeffer says.... 'As a matter of fact it is the only way man can think. The sobering fact is that the only way one can reject thinking in terms of an antithesis and the rational is on the basis of the rational and the antithesis.... This is the way God has made us and there is no other way to think. Therefore, the basis of classical logic is that A is not non-A'.... The term 'postmodern' has come along to describe the results of the rejection of both reason and Scripture. We are left floating in a sea of subjectivism. This despair has taken a predictable turn. Once the hope of knowing 'true truth' as Schaeffer called it has been given up, what sort of religious practice makes sense? The answer is mysticism. Now unfettered from both church authority and Biblical authority, the postmodern worshipper finds meaning in the subjectivism of mystical experience. It is not surprising that among those McLaren admires are key proponents of mysticism: Brother Lawrence, Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Henri Nouwen, Thomas Merton, et. al. Mysticism is a way of having a religious experience that does not require the theological distinctions and definitions that McLaren disparages." (cicministry.org/commentary/issue87.htm)

Conclusion

Some people may ask, "Why is logic so important?" "Isn't this just a side issue for philosophers to speculate about?" Whether we realize it or not, logic or the lack thereof affects all of us deeply. Philosophies that are thought up in "ivory towers" eventually trickle down into the fabric of societies, through popular movies, music, books, laws, etc. Saying that logic is not important is like cutting off the branch we're sitting on. Our God is a God of order. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Corinthians 14:40)

When a church abandons logic it can lead to the introverted extremes of mysticism on one hand, or to the extroverted extremes of misused charismatic gifts on the other hand. The so called "Toronto Blessing" was a prime example of the latter. "Over and over again we are told by the likes of Rodney Howard Browne, 'turn off your mind,' 'get out of your head' and enter in." (Randles, 1995; 10) Pastor Bill Randles warns, "There is coming an abandonment of all that smacks of order, tradition, logic, and reason." (Randles, 1995; 134)

When a society abandons logic, the result is tragic in the injustices that are allowed. When logic and absolutes are set aside, the whims of dictators and a sentimental attachment to false ideas will rule instead. God's Word is the logical foundation that can bring life and truth to both the church and to society.

Appendix 2

Recipe for Shipwreck: Misguided Endorsements of Madame Guyon's Works

Madame Guyon (AD 1648-1717), whose books are riddled with shallow, jagged rocks, capable of shipwrecking the unwary traveler, was endorsed, to one degree or another, by many respected leaders of the past, such as Count Zinzendorf, John Wesley, Adoniram Judson, Charles Spurgeon, A.W. Tozer, Watchman Nee, and others. How could all of these men possibly be wrong? That's really not the right question, since only the Bible is our infallible guide. In our own day and age, many evangelical leaders endorse the life of "Mother" Teresa, in spite of the fact that many of her mystical practices and doctrinal statements undermine biblical beliefs and spirituality. Helping the poor is a great thing, but that can be done biblically, while also helping the poor to come to eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, not just giving a temporary fix which leaves the person ignorant of the gospel.

Following what is popular or what is promoted by big name preachers is not what the Bereans of Paul's day did. "...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11) John Wesley himself confessed his error in falsely esteeming a book by Martin Luther just because it was well spoken of by others: "Monday, 15.--I set out for London, and read over in the way that celebrated book, Martin Luther's comment on the Epistle to the Galatians. I was utterly ashamed. How have I esteemed this book, only because I heard it so commended by others; or, at best, because I had read some excellent sentences occasionally quoted from it! But what shall I say, now I judge for myself?.... he is deeply tinctured with mysticism throughout and hence often dangerously wrong." (www.ccel.org/ccel/wesley/journal.txt)

Count Zinzendorf (AD 1700-1760) of the Moravians
"In the year 1731, several individuals, who either resided at Herrnhut, or were on a visit there, secretly disseminated the works of Madam Guion,

194

which were approved of by some. This induced the Count to read these writings, and particularly her spiritual discourses. But, believing that some of the mystics not only teach erroneous doctrines, but also use improper modes of speech respecting commonly received truths, he sought to extract that which was really good from them. Hence he began, in February, to speak upon a variety of subjects, in short meetings which he held, connected with Madam Guion's discourses. But I am of opinion he did not so much intend to introduce her writings into the church, as to bring off its members from them; and in this he succeeded." (From "The Life of Nicholas Lewis Count Zinzendorf" By August Gottlieb Spangenberg) (<http://goo.gl/r0IBZf>)

"In Zinzendorf the teachings of Arndt, Spener and Francke bear their natural fruit. Zinzendorf developed a system he called, "Theology of the Heart" which basically meant that heart-felt religious convictions and experiences were more trustworthy than theological understanding. As a natural outworking of this philosophy Zinzendorf emphasized the ecumenicalism of Francke, teaching that doctrinal difference between believers should be tolerated. Zinzendorf is best known today because of his leadership within the Moravians, a Pietist sect that had profound impact on the life of John Wesley....Based upon the studies of J. E. Hutton, historian of the Moravian movement, Arnold Dallimore writes: To them the value of the Bible consisted, not in its supposed infallibility, but in its appeal to their hearts.... The Bible was not its supreme authority, but authority lay also in personal experience, and, of course, varied according to the sentiments of the individual.... The Society's gatherings were characterized by an extraordinary fervour, but because of the lack of clear doctrinal teaching, its members proved susceptible to varying religious influences." (www.svchapel.org/resources/articles/23-doctrine/549-mysticism-part-5)

John Wesley (AD 1703-1791)

After living a very religious life (he was even a missionary to America), but not knowing the Lord, John Wesley was born- again in AD 1738. His own experience alone, of having great piety without being born-again, should have cautioned him against promoting the life of a devout

mystic (Madame Guyon), who followed the false doctrines of Rome. Devotion alone is not proof of knowing God, as Wesley preached in his famous "The Almost Christian" sermon. In his early life, Wesley was clearly opposed to mystical teachings.

AD 1742

"...I made an end of Madam Guyon's 'Short Method of Prayer' and 'Les Torrentes Spirituelles.' Ah, my brethren! I can answer your riddle, now I have ploughed with your heifer. The very words I have so often heard some of you use, are not your own, no more than they are God's. They are only retailed from this poor Quietist [see Footnote 1 on Quietism]; and that with the utmost faithfulness. Oh, that ye knew how much wiser is God than man! Then would you drop Quietists and Mystics together, and at all hazards keep to the plain, practical, written word of God." - The Journal of the Reverend John Wesley (<http://goo.gl/2gauDP>)

AD 1772

"...I have industriously guarded them from meddling with the Mystic writers, as they are usually called; because these are the most artful refiners of it that ever appeared in the Christian world, and the most bewitching. There is something like enchantment in them. When you get into them, you know not how to get out. Some of the chief of these, though in different ways, are Jacob Behmen and Madame Guyon. My dear friend, come not into their secret; keep in the plain, open Bible way. Aim at nothing higher, nothing deeper, than the religion described at large in our Lord's Sermon upon the Mount, and briefly summed up by St. Paul in the 13th chapter [of the First Epistle] to the Corinthians....All the high-sounding or mysterious expressions used by that class of writers either mean no more than this or they mean wrong. O beware of them! Leave them off before they are meddled with." (<http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1772/>)

AD 1773

"For what is prayer but the desire of the soul expressed in words to God, either inwardly or outwardly. How, then, will you teach them to express a desire who feel no desire at all? When, therefore, Madame Guyon talks

in that manner, it often makes me afraid that both she and her teacher, Archbishop Fenelon, talked by rote of the things they knew not. Both of them had an amazing genius, but I doubt full little experience. It is exceeding certain neither his nor her writings are likely to do us any solid service. We have all the gold that is in them without the dross, which is often not only useless but dangerous. Let you and I keep the good old way." (wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1773/)

AD 1773

"Madame Guyon was a good woman and is a fine writer, but very far from judicious. Her writings will lead any one who is fond of them into unscriptural Quietism. They strike at the root, and tend to make us rest contented without either faith or works. It is certain the Scripture by 'prayer' almost always means vocal prayer. And whosoever intermits this for any time will neither pray with the voice nor the heart. It is therefore our wisdom to force ourselves to prayer-- to pray whether we can pray or no. And many times while we are so doing the fire will fall from heaven, and we shall know our labor was not in vain." (wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1773/)

Saying that someone is a "good woman" or a "fine writer", is not the same as saying she is a Christian woman or an edifying writer. It is probably the following bad advice by Guyon that Wesley was addressing in the quote above: Guyon advised, "Now that your soul has been called to a state of inward silence, you should not burden yourself with vocal prayers." (Chadwick, 93) At this point though, in 1774, Wesley started compromising, acknowledging the "excellent things" in Guyon's books, and recommended the recipient of his letter to read only those things which he published, but two years later, he published a biography of Madame Guyon (although it was an abridged version)!

AD 1774

"There are many excellent things in Madame Guyon's works, and there are many that are exceedingly dangerous. The more so because the good things make way for the mischievous ones. And it is not easy unless for

those of much experience, to distinguish the one from the other. Perhaps, therefore, it might be safest for you chiefly to confine yourself to what we have published." (wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1774)

AD 1776

"John Wesley owned many works by Madame Guyon and in 1776 he republished her autobiography which had been translated into English by a Quaker." (<http://goo.gl/w4RTdC>)

"Concerning Madame Guyon, a mystic believed by many to be on the cutting edge of spirituality in her time, he [John Wesley] cautioned [in the preface to his version of Madame Guyon's life]: 'The grand source of all her mistakes was this, the not being guided by the written word. She did not take the Scripture for the rule of her actions; at most it was but the secondary rule. Inward impressions, which she called inspirations, were her primary rule. The written word was not a lantern to her feet, a light in all her paths. No; she followed another light, the outward light of her confessors, and the inward light of her own spirit.' (An extract of the Life of Madam Guion. By John Wesley, M.A, 7) (<http://goo.gl/xUVnXL>)

AD 1789

"Not that I would recommend a cold, dead, formal prayer, out of which both love and desire, hope and fear, are excluded. Such seems to have been "the calm and undisturbed method of prayer," so strongly recommended by the late Bishop Hoadly, which occasioned for some years so violent a contest in the religious world. Is it not probable that the well-meaning bishop had met with some of the Mystics or Quietists (such as Madam Guion, or the Archbishop [Fenelon] of Cambray) and that having no experience of these things he patched together a theory of his own as nearly resembling theirs as he could? But it is certain nothing is farther from apathy than real, scriptural devotion. It excites, exercises, and gives full scope to all our nobler passions; and excludes none but those that are wild, irrational, and beneath the dignity of man." (<http://new.gbgbm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/117/>)

In the quote above, Wesley also recognized the danger of the irrational, which Guyon did not see as a danger. Guyon advised, "...let your soul linger sweetly and silently on the Scripture verse you have read. Do not try to reason out the truth in it..." (Chadwick, 17) Guyon further confirmed, "We must, therefore, continue steadfastly and immovable in our abandonment, without listening to the voice of natural reason." (Chadwick, 36) This anti-rational stance is common in Guyon and other mystics, but the downplaying of logic opens up the floodgate for irrational and unbiblical "revelations." More on this in the section about Watchman Nee.

Later in life (AD 1789) Wesley still saw the error's of Madame Guyon's ways, and still rightly promoted "scriptural devotion," in contrast to mysticism, but the damage was already done. In Wesley's abridged version of Guyon's life, he had already made a partial acceptance, and a half-hearted endorsement of her teachings, even though he gave due caution for his readers, saying "The grand source of all her mistakes was this, the not being guided by the written word." Nowadays many who promote Guyon's works refer to John Wesley to bolster their claim, as though Wesley had made a full endorsement of Guyon's works. This is one of the dangers of compromise- the often unseen (though at other times clearly seen) negative influence it brings to many others.

Adoniram Judson (AD 1788-1850)

"He seemed at one time to be inclined to embrace the mystical tenets of Thomas a Kempis, Fenelon, and Madame Guyon, and it was feared that he was leaning toward those monkish austerities which belong peculiarly to the spirit of the Roman Church. Certainly there are passages here and there in his writings which point in this direction. And yet, often in these extracts it can be discerned with what cautious and stealthy steps he trod the perilous pathway leading toward monastic asceticism. On the occasion of sending a gift of money to his sister in America, he writes: "But I give it on the express condition that you appropriate part of it to purchase for yourself the life of Lady Guyon... and I hope you will read it diligently, and endeavor to emulate that most excellent saint so far as she was right." (<http://goo.gl/Mqd5A3>)

"...so far as she was right"? This was very irresponsible advice to his sister to buy Guyon's book and assume she could rightly discern between the error and the truth, like sending a box of food mixed with poison. If he wanted to bless his sister, he should have just sent her a truly good book, without the spiritual dangers which are present in Guyon's books.

Charles Spurgeon (AD 1834-1892)

Spurgeon has a great quote about the dangers of the Catholic church. It is too bad, that like King Solomon, he did not heed his own recommendations: "Since he was cursed who rebuilt Jericho, much more the man who labours to restore Popery among us. In our fathers' days the gigantic walls of Popery fell by the power of their faith, the perseverance of their efforts, and the blast of their gospel trumpets; and now there are some who would rebuild that accursed system upon its old foundation. O Lord, be pleased to thwart their unrighteous endeavours, and pull down every stone which they build. It should be a serious business with us to be thoroughly purged of every error which may have a tendency to foster the spirit of Popery, and when we have made a clean sweep at home we should seek in every way to oppose its all too rapid spread abroad in the church and in the world. This last can be done in secret by fervent prayer, and in public by decided testimony. We must warn with judicious boldness those who are inclined towards the errors of Rome; we must instruct the young in gospel truth, and tell them of the black doings of Popery in the olden times.....Are we doing all we can for Jesus and the gospel? If not, our negligence plays into the hands of the priestcraft. What are we doing to spread the Bible, which is the Pope's bane and poison? Are we casting abroad good, sound gospel writings?...If the thousands who will read this short word this night will do all they can to hinder the rebuilding of this accursed Jericho, the Lord's glory shall speed among the sons of men. Reader, what can you do? What will you do?" (www.heartlight.org/spurgeon/0529-pm.html)

Here are some quotes by Charles Spurgeon concerning Madame Guyon: "The mystics are a class of people who have a peculiar attraction for my mind; and I suppose the mention of such a name as that of Madame Guyon, who, among females, stands at the very head of the school, will

awaken in many of you many sweet remembrances of times enjoyed in reading her blessed hymns, and of her sweet and admirable life. But, after all, it is not the highest style of Christian living to be a mystic." (www.spurgeongems.org/vols10-12/chs677.pdf)

"The church of Rome is a church defiled with error and debased with superstition, but was there ever a nobler Christian woman in this world than Madame de la Mothe Guyon? She did not depart from Christ, though in the midst of a pestilent atmosphere. Remember, too, the names of Jansenius, Arnold, Pascal, and Fenelon which are an honor to the universal Church of Christ—who ever walked in closer communion with Christ than those holy men did?" (www.spurgeongems.org/vols52-54/chs3046.pdf)

"If you preach much about emotional religion and the heart-work of godliness, cold-blooded professors label you as rather mystical and begin to talk of Madame Guyon and the danger of the Quietist school of religion." (www.spurgeongems.org/vols22-24/chs1281.pdf)

It is really surprising to see these kinds of quotes from Spurgeon, especially since he was very clear about speaking against the false doctrines of the Roman Catholic church. And, in Spurgeon's audience there were surely young believers and non-Christians present also. Maybe even some Catholics heard or read his sermons. If so, seeing and hearing his endorsement of Madame Guyon and then reading Guyon, would have only reinforced their faith in Rome. Although Spurgeon was wise concerning the false doctrines of Rome, he negligently let in the Trojan Horse of Madame Guyon's Catholic teachings (and other mystics such as Fenelon), unchallenged among Christ's flock. The teachings of Madame Guyon are clearly misleading for young believers, but they are even misleading for older believers, as we will see in the life of A.W. Tozer.

R.A. Torrey (AD 1856-1928)

R.A. Torrey also wrote about prayer, but put the Bible as our foundation and warned against mysticism. "It is not by seasons of mystical

meditation and rapturous experiences that we learn to abide in Christ; it is by feeding upon His word, His written word as found in the Bible, and looking to the Holy Spirit to implant these words in our hearts and to make them a living thing in our hearts." (www.ccel.org/ccel/torrey/pray.txt)

A.W. Tozer (AD 1897-1963)

"In 1963, the year of his death, Tozer wrote, *The Christian Book of Mystical Verse*, a poetry collection from the saintly mystics..."

(justthebook.wordpress.com/2009/01/22/a-w-tozer-the-mystic-part-1/)

From Preface to Tozer's "*Knowledge of the Holy*" "...Were Christians today reading such works as those of Augustine or Anselm a book like this would have no reason for being. But such illuminated masters are known to modern Christians only by name..." (justthebook.wordpress.com/2009/01/22/a-w-tozer-the-mystic-part-1/)

"Nicolas, John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila and many others of Tozer's "saints" were active supporters of the anti-Christian papal system, and of the works-related method of salvation. Are they considered holy just because they speak of sanctification, Christ and heaven? The Devil does as much. Tozer bemoaned the fact that these writers are virtually unknown in modern times. In this we agree - if they were more thoroughly known then Tozer's quotes can be shown for what they really are - passages taken largely out of context from a system that has much more of the Counter-Reformation than the Reformation. And his quoting of these mystics is more frequent than you might expect. In his slim volume, "*Knowledge of the Holy*", for instance, there are at least eighteen quotes that are to be found." (www.onthewing.org/user/Tozer1%20Reconsidered%20-%20Riggle.pdf)

" Tozer did not ask for spiritual references when he effusively praised the ecstatic utterances of Julian of Norwich, nor of the "insights" of that "master of the inner life" (his words), Evelyn Underhill, the ecumenicist mystic. If he would have asked for proper Scriptural backing from them, and found them wanting, he would have saved himself much confusion -

and the church much polluting error that is now hard to eradicate."
(www.onthewing.org/user/Tozer1%20Reconsidered%20-%20Riggle.pdf)

"In *TAG* [The Attributes of God by A.W. Tozer], Tozer extensively cites the writings of a medieval mystic and visionary, Julian of Norwich, a woman who chose to use a man's name. Julian was an anchoress – a person who, claiming religious reasons, lived a life of extreme ascetism and isolation from others – believing any social contact would contaminate her before God.... Another medieval mystic whom Tozer held in high regard and cites as being equally authoritative with Julian is an obscure monk named Brother Lawrence. Brother Lawrence had a series of meditations which after his death were collected and published as *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Julian of Norwich, Brother Lawrence, and Meister Eckhardt [another mystic cited favorably by Tozer], did not base their practices upon the teaching of scriptures. Their writings were the result of hallucinations produced during trance states [altered states of consciousness], during which their bodies became inhabited by what Scripture calls 'familiar spirits.'" (davestheology.wordpress.com/2013/04/18/a-w-tozer-a-trojan-horse-for-apostasy/)

From Tozer's "Man: the Dwelling Place of God": "Most of the great masters of the deeper life, such as Fenelon, Molinos [see Footnote 1], John of the Cross, Madame Guyon and a host of others, have warned against pseudo-religious experiences that provide much carnal enjoyment but feed the flesh and puff up the heart with self-love." Is Guyon a "master?" Certainly not from a biblical perspective. (www.worldinvisible.com/library/tozer/5j00.0010/5j00.0010.29.htm)

The Results of Mysticism in Tozer's Life

It is clear from these quotes that Tozer was not only into Madame Guyon's writings, but the writings of many of the mystics. This emphasis on mysticism like the detachment from the world of Buddhist and Catholic monks, had sad consequences for his family and others in his church.

"On the personal front, while Tozer sought, and apparently found, intimacy with God, he neither sought nor had intimacy with people. After church services Tozer shunned conversation with adults and often slipped into the nursery. He refused to do counseling, pastoral or hospital visits. Very few people were ever allowed to get to know him and this included his family. He rejected involvement with extended family which was a source of pain for his immediate family. With the exception of his younger child and only daughter, his children felt estranged from their father. Tozer had time for God and preaching but little time for family. But the greatest estrangement was from his wife Ada. Tozer seemed to lack closeness with Ada almost from the beginning of their marriage, and he did not seem to consider her feelings nor consult her even on important matters. A year after Tozer's death, Ada remarried and, when asked about her happiness, consistently replied: "I have never been happier in my life. Aiden (Tozer) loved Jesus Christ, but Leonard Odam loves me" (p. 160). One has to wonder how a man who sought such intimacy with God could shun intimacy with his own wife and children. Perhaps we will never have the answer to that question but it does leave a dark blot on Tozer's legacy." (www.svchapel.org/resources/book-reviews/3-biographies/431-a-passion-for-god-the-spiritual-journey-of-aw-tozer-by-lyle-dorsett)

Watchman Nee (AD 1903-1972)

Regarding "Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ" by Madame Guyon, "Watchman Nee saw that this book was translated into Chinese, and made available to every new convert of The Little Flock." (<http://goo.gl/3yIHjO>)

It is asking for shipwreck to expose anyone to Madame Guyon's teachings, whether a young or an old believer. Those with influence in Watchman Nee's early life exposed him to Madame Guyon, and this influence can be seen in how he leaned towards mysticism and "intuition," instead of making God's Word the sure foundation of his life. This in turn formed the unstable foundation for those whom Nee influenced, such as the cult leader Witness Lee, and others.

Early influences in Watchman Nee's Life

"Nee also got doses of Catholic mysticism through the writings of Madame Jeanne Guyon, as published in Penn Lewis' magazine." (www.apologeticsindex.org/2694-watching-out-for-watchman-nee)

"Nee continued to read widely and when Barber exposed him to the writings of John Darby, he found the basis for his ecclesiology, or thoughts on the church. From that point, everything Nee wrote on the church is easily identified with the teachings of the Plymouth Brethren. He rejected clergy as unscriptural." (www.apologeticsindex.org/2694-watching-out-for-watchman-nee)

Nee's Teachings

"Nee outlines no method of Bible study and interpretation and appears to deny evangelical hermeneutics. In his book *Spiritual Authority*, he sets himself and his elders up as the unquestionable authorities. By all appearances, Nee saw himself not as a servant but as a guru." (www.apologeticsindex.org/2694-watching-out-for-watchman-nee)

"...Nee taught there should only be one congregation in each city. Whenever Nee's followers moved into a city, they proclaimed themselves as the only church approved by God in that city." (www.apologeticsindex.org/n00.html#neew)

"One gets the impression from Nee that the Bible was not nearly as important as Christians generally consider it. In his book *The Ministry of God's Word*, Nee says, "Words alone cannot be considered God's Word."

In this book, Nee becomes very philosophical, mystical and incoherent." (www.apologeticsindex.org/2694-watching-out-for-watchman-nee)

Arthur Johnson, author of "Faith Misguided," wrote concerning a type of mystical revelation, which was in keeping with Watchman Nee's teachings, "Ordinary knowledge of all kinds is scorned as inferior and unspiritual because it depends on the mind. On the other hand, that which is nonrational is praised as spiritual." (web.archive.org/web/20030207191255/http://www.thelocalchurch.org/faithmisguided.html) In "The Spiritual Man," Nee wrote, "Man's soulful faculties cannot perceive God: nothing else can be a substitute for intuition. Except a man receives a new life from God and has his intuition resurrected, he is eternally separated from God" Nee exalts "intuition" which is not even a biblical term, to the detriment of reason.

Also, in "The Spiritual Man," Nee wrote, "Such experiences inform us that our intuition, the organ for the working of the Holy Spirit, is capable itself of distinguishing good from evil without any assistance from the mind's observation and investigation."

In "Spiritual Reality or Obsession," Nee said, "A wonderful thing happens after you touch reality. Whenever you encounter someone who has not touched, or entered into, reality, you immediately sense it. You know he has not touched that reality because he is still following the mind, the law, the rule or regulation. Before God there is something which the Bible calls 'true.' It is nothing other than 'reality.' In relating to this trueness - this reality - one is delivered from doctrine, letter, human thoughts, and human ways."

Arthur Johnson wrote, "In insisting on a secondary place for doctrine, Nee is setting up a conflict between the written Word of God and what he takes to be the work of the Holy Spirit within us....The biblical teaching, on the other hand, is that the Holy Spirit's tool in doing His work in us is the written Word....The Scriptures know nothing of a tension between the written Word of God and the work of the Holy

Spirit within us, as Nee suggests." (web.archive.org/web/20030207191255/http://www.thelocalchurch.org/faithmisguided.html)

In "The Release of the Spirit," Nee said, " Today if you are listening to a prophetic message, you will realize that there is a mystic something other than word and thought present. This you can clearly sense, and may well call it the spirit in God's Word."

Madame Guyon's writings likewise downplay the rational, in favor of the "intuitive." Guyon wrote, "May I hasten to say that the kind of prayer I am speaking of is not a prayer that comes from your mind. It is a prayer that begins in the heart....Prayer that comes out of the heart is not interrupted by thinking." (Guyon, 4)

Arthur Johnson wrote, "Fortunately, Watchman Nee does not carry his position to its logical extension. He does not elevate his own pronouncements, based on these mystical elements, to an authoritative position equal to or greater than Scripture. However, he has clearly laid the foundation for such an equation.... The key to Watchman Nee's position is: the nonrational, intuitive functions of man provide a special "organ" for relating to God. Once this is accepted, the door is open for all sorts of nonbiblical views." (<http://goo.gl/sl4NvS>)

Madame Guyon's (AD 1648-1717) *Mystical Life and Teachings* Guyon, like many Catholics, prayed to Mary. "I did not fail to say my vocal prayers every day, to confess pretty often, and to partake of the communion almost every fortnight. Sometimes I went to church to weep, and to pray to the Blessed Virgin to obtain my conversion." (Plantinga, 23)

Guyon wrote in her autobiography concerning the time after her husband died, and like other Catholic mystics, spoke of Christ as her personal spouse, as opposed to the biblical teaching of the church corporately being the bride of Christ. "It was in the morning of July 21, 1676, that he died. Next day I entered into my closet, in which was the image of my divine spouse, the Lord Jesus Christ. I renewed my marriage-

contract, and added thereto a vow of chastity, with a promise to make it perpetual, if M. Bertot my director, would permit me." (Plantinga, 83)

Guyon also advocated visualization, contrary to what the apostles wrote. "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:29); and, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing..." (I Peter 1:8). Guyon wrote, "We must not form any image of the Deity, though we may of Jesus Christ, seeing Him in His birth, or His crucifixion, or in some other state or mystery, provided the soul always seeks Him in its own center." (Chadwick, 24)

Some examples of Guyon's unbiblical advice and teachings:
"...your soul should not attempt to do anything other than withdraw itself from external objects and turn inward." (Chadwick, 60)

"The more passive and tranquil the soul remains, and the freer it is from self-effort, the more rapidly it advances..." (Chadwick, 61)

"All our attention should, therefore, be directed toward developing the greatest amount of ability to withdraw inward." (Chadwick, 61)

"All their praying is now done in silence...it is of the utmost importance to remain as silent as possible." (Chadwick, 68-69)

"...the soul that is quiet and peaceful in prayer often sinks into a...mystical... slumber in which all of its powers are at rest...the soul is wholly adapted to this mystical slumber..." (Chadwick, 70)

"The only way to find God is to direct your thoughts and feelings inward." (Chadwick, 75)

"But here in this mystical death of the soul, all things are alike. Now being dead, the soul is insensible to everything that concerns it...It has no preference between being an angel or devil..." (Chadwick, 185)

"The transformation...is recognized by the lack of distinction between God and their soul- it is no longer able to separate itself...from God... everything is equally God, because it has passed into its Original Source, reunited to its ALL, and changed into Him." (Chadwick, 199)

"The only way to overcome the senses is to draw the soul completely inward to an awareness of the presence of the indwelling God.... By focusing its attention inward, it weakens the senses, and is nearer to the inward awareness of God the more it is separated from the awareness of self..." (Chadwick, 54) Buddhism also seeks to separate a person from an awareness of self (anatta) and detach from their senses. The theological terms are different here, but an altered state of consciousness is sought in both, weakening the senses and going inward.

Madame Guyon also used words for the sake of getting beyond words and in order to quiet the mind. "First, read a passage of Scripture. Once you sense the Lord's presence, the content of what you have read is no longer important. The Scripture has served its purpose; it has quieted your mind....If your mind begins to wander, just turn your attention back again to the inward parts of your being." (Guyon, 9-10)

"When your mind has wandered, don't try to deal with it by changing what you are thinking.... Instead, withdraw from your mind!" (Guyon, 12)

Conclusion

G. Richard Fisher wrote, "It is curious that Moody Press is responsible for Guyon's autobiography while also publishing Arthur Johnson's *Faith Misguided*, which exposed the dangers of mysticism. It is also curious that Moody has let Johnson's book go out of print while for decades has continued to print Guyon's volume." (<http://www.pfo.org/mguyon.htm>) Other "evangelical" publishers of Guyon's works include Bridge-Logos, CLC Publications, and Whitaker House.

Endorsements from "reputable" publishers or famous preachers don't guarantee that a book is biblical. We must, "Prove all things; hold fast

that which is good." (I Thessalonians 5:21) We need not sail in shallow waters where deceptive doctrines lurk like jagged rocks. Madame Guyon's books and the books of other mystics are recipes for shipwreck. There are plenty of good books out there which are edifying and biblical. If a person is not satisfied just reading the biblical books that are out there, and with reading the Bible itself, what does that say? Like the children of Israel not satisfied with the daily Manna God gave them, this shows they are looking for something beyond what is biblical. May we be satisfied with and delight in what God has given us in His Word, and thereby love the truth. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17)

Footnote 1 from David Kowalski's article on Quietism:

Eastern religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism are perhaps the most extreme examples of quietism. The impediment to enlightenment in these religions is not self as a rebellious independent but self in its very humanity. Both mind and will are seen as enemies to be blotted out. Once mind and will are entirely negated, the practitioner achieves ecstatic enlightenment. Buddhist teacher Ajahn Chah says one must "exhaust the mind's ability to concoct thought." In the Christian tradition, quietism refers to a passive approach to living which sees intellectual stillness, and the inward quieting or negating of our wills as the key to victorious, Christian living. Instead of teaching a self, renewed in Christ, quietism teaches a kind of self-annihilation. Quietistic strains have existed since very early times in the church, showing themselves in such things as Neoplatonism. Some medieval mystics sought this intellectual stillness and interior passivity, speaking of a kind of union with God in which the individual is absorbed into the deity with the human will or self being subsumed and essentially nullified in this experience.

Miguel de Molinos

This self-eradication to achieve a higher state among early, Christian mystics is sometimes difficult to distinguish from the concepts of moksha and nirvana in Eastern religions (this is true, for example, to some degree of the teachings and practice of Meister Eckhart [1260 –

1327]). Full-blown quietism is often traced to Miguel de Molinos, a 17th-century Spanish priest who influenced the thought and spirituality of notable quietists such as Madame Jeanne Guyon. Guyon saw Christian life not as a renewal of self by the Spirit but as a replacement of self by the Spirit that happens in the mystical state of “union”:
"Indeed He drew my soul more and more into Himself, till it lost itself entirely out of sight, and could perceive itself no more. It seemed at first to pass into Him. As one sees a river pass into the ocean, lose itself in it, its water for a time distinguished from that of the sea, till it gradually becomes transformed into the same sea, and possesses all its qualities; so was my soul lost in God, who communicated to it His qualities, having drawn it out of all that it had of its own."
(www.apologeticsindex.org/2985-quietism)

Appendix 3

The Mystical Roots and Fruits of the Quakers

With a history of about 360 years and a current membership of about 360,000 people, the Quakers have some unique aspects to their theology. Traditionally they have emphasized being led by an "Inner Light" as opposed to being led by the teachings of the Bible. This has led to an experiential theology, and a drift into mysticism. How did this movement begin and what are some of the modern fruits of this movement?

George Fox's Replacement of God's Word

George Fox (AD 1624-1691), the founder of the Quakers, early in his life had a mystical encounter wherein he became unconscious and was greatly altered. This is not unlike the unconscious zoning out of Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, and other mystics. Fox wrote, "There was one Brown, who had great prophecies and sights upon his death-bed of me. He spoke only of what I should be made instrumental by the Lord to bring forth.... When this man was buried a great work of the Lord fell upon me, to the admiration of many, who thought I had been dead, and many came to see me for about fourteen days. I was very much altered in countenance and person, as if my body had been new moulded or changed." (Fox, 34)

One time when Fox was at a church service, when the minister exhorted people to take the Bible as their standard for testing doctrines, Fox took great offence at this and insisted it must be the Holy Spirit which is our standard for testing doctrines: "He [the minister] took for his text these words of Peter, 'We have also a more sure Word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.' And he told the people that this was the Scriptures, by which they were to try all doctrines, religions, and opinions. Now the Lord's power was so mighty upon me, and so strong in me, that I could not hold, but was made to cry out and say, 'Oh, no; it is not the Scriptures!' and I told them what it was,

namely, the Holy Spirit, by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried..." (Fox, 44)

This sounds very spiritual, but it replaces the objective Word of God, with an inward and subjective mode of testing doctrine. Also, it places an artificial difference between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, as if these were not in agreement with each other. George Mueller (AD 1805-1898), that man of faith who God used to care for many orphans in England said, "The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them." (Mueller, 3)

Also, the purpose of the Holy Spirit is not to bring attention to Himself, but to Jesus: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:13-14)

Much of Fox's theology was not based on God's Word, but on mystical experiences, such as the following one, "Great things did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful depths were opened unto me, beyond what can by words be declared; but as people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the Word of wisdom that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being." (Fox, 39)

Jacob Boehme's Influence on the Quakers

In a footnote regarding the previous quote, the editors point out the connection of Quakers to Jacob Boehme's thoughts: "This passage which records a striking personal experience is undated. It is strangely like an experience of the great German mystic, Jacob Boehme, whose works were published in England about the time Fox was beginning his missionary labors. He, too, had all nature opened to him, so that he says

he saw the true significance and essence of things.... Muggleton, in his 'Looking Glass for G. Fox' (second edition, 1756, page 10), says that the writings of Boehme are the 'chief books' bought by the followers of Fox." (Fox, 39)

Richard Baxter (AD 1615-1691) wrote against the errors of the followers of Jacob Boehme as follows, "The fifth Sect are the Behmenists, whose Opinions go much toward the way of the former [the Quakers], for the Sufficiency of the Light of Nature, the Salvation of Heathens as well as Christians, and a dependence on Revelations, &c.... Their Doctrine is to be seen in Jacob Behmen's [Jacob Boehme] Books.... The chiefest of these in England are Dr. Pordage and his Family, who live together in Community, and pretend to hold visible and sensible Communion with Angels, whom they sometime see, and sometime smell, &c.... The Doctor wrote a Book to vindicate himself, in which he professeth to have sensible Communion with Angels, and to know by sights and smells, &c. good Spirits from bad.... They then professed to wait for such a Coming down of the holy Ghost: upon them, as should send them out as his Missionaries to unite, and reconcile, and heal the Churches, and do wonders in the World ; But its fifteen years ago, and yet they are latent and their work undone." (Baxter, 77-78)

John Wesley (AD 1703-1791) wrote against the errors of Jacob Boehme on at least three occasions-- in 1756: "In matters of religion I regard no writings but the inspired. Tauler, Behmen [Jacob Boehme], and an whole army of Mystic authors are with me nothing to St. Paul. In every point I appeal 'to the law and the testimony,' and value no authority but this." (wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1756a/); in 1760: "It is sure, in exposing the Philosophy of Behmen [Jacob Boehme], I use ridicule as well as argument; and yet I trust I have by the grace of God been in some measure 'serious in religion,'.... My reason is this, and no other: I think he [Jacob Boehme] contradicts Scripture, reason, and himself; and that he has seduced many unwary souls from the Bible way of salvation." (wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1760/); and in 1772: "You cannot imagine what trouble I have had for many years to prevent

our friends from refining upon religion. Therefore I have industriously guarded them from meddling with the Mystic writers, as they are usually called; because these are the most artful refiners of it that ever appeared in the Christian world, and the most bewitching. There is something like enchantment in them. When you get into them, you know not how to get out. Some of the chief of these, though in different ways, are Jacob Behmen and Madame Guyon. My dear friend, come not into their secret; keep in the plain, open Bible way." (wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1772/)

Pastor Bob DeWaay further points out, "Boehme's mysticism included an eclectic mix gleaned from cabbalism, alchemy, neoplatonism, and other really bad sources. Even Theosophists claim Boehme as one of their own." ([cicministry.org/ commentary/issue101.htm](http://cicministry.org/commentary/issue101.htm))

Bunyan and Baxter Opposed the Quakers

Two of George Fox's (AD 1624-1691) contemporaries who wrote against the Quakers were John Bunyan (AD 1628-1688), author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Richard Baxter (AD 1615-1691), who was a puritan pastor and author. Bunyan had this to say about the Quakers: "...for as the Quakers did oppose His truth, so God did the more confirm me in it, by leading me into the scriptures that did wonderfully maintain it. The errors that this people then maintained were: 1. That the holy Scriptures were not the Word of God. 2. That every man in the world had the spirit of Christ, grace, faith, etc. 3. That Christ Jesus, as crucified, and dying 1600 years ago, did not satisfy divine justice for the sins of the people. 4. That Christ's flesh and blood was within the saints. 5. That the bodies of the good and bad that are buried in the churchyard shall not arise again. 6. That the resurrection is past with good men already. 7. That that man Jesus, that was crucified between two thieves on Mount Calvary, in the land of Canaan, by Jerusalem, was not ascended up above the starry heavens. 8. That He should not, even the same Jesus that died by the hands of the Jews, come again at the last day, and as man judge all nations, etc. Many more vile and abominable things were in those days fomented by them..." (Bunyan, 32) These doctrines may not have been held by all Quakers, because Fox having

taken away the Word of God as the standard for doctrine, each Quaker could be led subjectively to doctrines as they were "led" by their own "Inner Light" to various unbiblical beliefs.

Baxter described the Quakers as follows, "And that was the fourth Sect, the Quakers.... They make the Light which every Man hath within him to be his sufficient Rule, and consequently the Scripture and Ministry are set light by: They speak much for the dwelling and working of the Spirit in us; but little of Justification, and the Pardon of Sin, and our Reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ : They pretend their dependence on the Spirit's Conduct, against Set-times of Prayer, and against Sacraments, and against their due esteem of Scripture and Ministry. They will not have the Scripture called the Word of God : Their principal Zeal lieth in railing at the Ministers as Hirelings, Deceivers, False Prophets, &c. and in refusing to Swear before a Magistrate, or to put off their Hat to any, or to say [You] instead of [Thou] or [Thee] which are their words to all. At first they did use to fall into Tremblings and sometime Vomitings in their Meetings, and pretended to be violently acted by the Spirit; but now that is ceased, they only meet, and he that pretendeth to be moved by the Spirit speaketh ; and sometime they say nothing, but sit an hour or more in silence, and then depart. One while divers of them went Naked through divers chief Towns and Cities of the Land , as a Prophetical act: Some of them have famished and drowned themselves in Melancholy; and others undertaken by the Power of the Spirit to raise them..." (Baxter, 77)

By the way, the terms "thee" and "thou" are actually informal terms in old English, even though nowadays we think of them as being formal terms. In the King James Bible these informal terms were used when addressing God, not out of disrespect, but because believers are in God's family. In modern German Bibles, the informal "du" is also used for God, instead of the formal "sie," for the same reason. The Quakers often got in trouble by using "thee" and "thou," putting everyone on the informal level, instead of using the more formal word, "you."

Quakers would sometimes rail at Baxter in his congregation, but after Baxter exposed their errors, the people were protected from the gainsayers: "Another thing which advantaged us was some publick Disputations which we had with Gainsayers, which very much confirmed the People: The Quakers would fain have got entertainment and set up a Meeting in the Town (and frequently railed at me in the Congregation): But when I had once given them leave to meet in the Church, for a Dispute, and before the people, had opened their deceits and shame, none would entertain them more, nor did they get one Proselyte among us." (Baxter, 88)

Also, referring to " the Fanaticks called Quakers ," Baxter said this of their practice, "And the poor deluded Souls would sometimes meet only to sit still in Silence (when, as they said, the Spirit did not speak)..." (Baxter, 436)

18th Century Comments About the Quakers

Jonathan Edwards (AD 1703-1758) had this to say about the Quakers, "...the person to whom the Spirit gives testimony, and for whom he raises their esteem, must be that Jesus who appeared in the flesh, and not another Christ in his stead; nor any mystical fantastical Christ; such as the light within. This the spirit of Quakers extols, while it diminishes their esteem of and dependence upon an outward Christ-- or Jesus as he came in the flesh-- and leads them off from him; but the spirit that gives testimony for that Jesus, and leads to him, can be no other than the Spirit of God." (Edwards, 769)

David Brainerd (AD 1718-1747), missionary to the native Americans, made these observations about the results of the Quaker "works righteousness" (as opposed to salvation by grace), "There were sundry persons of the Indians newly come here, who had frequently lived among Quakers; and being more civilized and conformed to English manners than the generality of the Indians, they had imbibed some of the Quakers' errors, especially this fundamental one, viz. That if men will but live soberly and honestly, according to the dictates of their own consciences,(or the light within,) there is then no danger or doubt of their

salvation, &c. These persons I found much worse to deal with than those who are wholly under pagan darkness, who make no pretences to knowledge in Christianity at all, nor have any self-righteous foundation to stand upon." (Edwards, 1138)

Extroverted and Introverted Extremes

Experience-based truth seeking (instead of seeking truth through the Bible) is spiritually dangerous-- especially when this seeking leads to experiences which contradict and go beyond what is written in God's Word. Experience is good when it comes as a result of applying God's Word to our lives, or when God applies something to our lives, which is confirmed to be from God, because it's in agreement with God's Word. Seeking and accepting experiences without regard to warnings in God's Word leaves a person without a proper anchor for their soul.

There are two modern Quaker trained pastors, who like George Fox, put an unhealthy emphasis on the Holy Spirit and experiences in contradiction to God's Word. These two pastors tend to appeal to extroverts on the one hand (John Wimber and the extreme elements of the Pentecostal movement) and introverts on the other hand (Richard Foster with his emphasis on mystical techniques and disciplines). Although these two movements look very different outwardly, they are based on the same underlying principle-- that of putting the Bible in a secondary position, and putting experiences in the priority position.

Promoter of the Extroverted Unbiblical: John Wimber

A former Quaker, John Wimber (AD 1934-1997) assumed leadership of the Vineyard churches in 1982. The strange and world famous "drunk in the Spirit" manifestations at the Toronto Airport Vineyard began in 1994. More than ten years earlier, in 1981, in what was to become a Vineyard church, (then still under Calvary Chapel) of which John Wimber was the pastor, similarly strange phenomenon occurred. Bill Randles pointed out that at both of these two locations: "There was a prophecy in the name of the Holy Ghost," "There was a prayer to the Holy Ghost," and "There were similar manifestations, bouncing, shaking, violently falling, weeping, electricity." (Randles, 76) Randles

further pointed out, "Toronto didn't happen 'out of the blue,' it is my contention that thousands have been pre-conditioned to enter into the mystical experiences that make up this revival." (Randles, 81)

Such conditioning can begin with a shift in emphasis, such as George Fox's emphasis on the Holy Spirit's confirmation, instead of using the Bible to confirm or reject doctrines. John Wimber spent many years with the Quakers and undoubtedly was influenced by their doctrinal distinctives. Wimber began his Christian life in a Quaker Church in 1963, became a Quaker pastor in 1970, and continued in that church until 1977. In a way, he was more of a Quaker than the modern Quakers, as they eventually parted ways with him, while the movements that Wimber endorsed embraced the bodily quaking phenomenon which the original Quakers were named for. A large part of the congregation in 1981, which experienced strange manifestations, were former members of the Quaker church who came with John Wimber when he left:

"As the Holy Spirit continued to move, Carol [John's wife] was involved in a small group named 'Afterglow' with her friends from the Quaker church. As they focused their attention on the Holy Spirit, and enjoying His presence, God began to move and stories spread through the town of signs and wonders happening in this group. The Quaker church sent one of their leaders to investigate and even shut down the group.... As these experiences were counter to the direction in which this Quaker church was moving at the time John and Carol, with the generous blessing of the Quakers were encouraged to resign their membership, and together with about sixty other people connected with Don McClure and became the Yorba Linda Calvary Chapel in May 1977."

(<http://www.vineyardchurches.org.uk>)

Wimber was asked to leave Calvary Chapel in 1982, because of this overt emphasis on manifestations, instead of on Scripture. Al Dager writes, "Wimber made two statements in defense of the manifestations at Yorba Linda on which Chuck Smith challenged him: 1) 'God is above His Word'; and 2) 'God is not limited by His Word.' In other words, Wimber did not need a Scriptural basis for the manifestations. Smith

then offered the Calvary Chapel pastors the opportunity to either remain with Calvary Chapel and stress the teaching of Scripture, or follow after Wimber and stress manifestations. Many chose to follow Wimber, converting their churches to Vineyards."

(http://www.inplainsite.org/html/vineyard_john_wimber.html)

Like other mystics, Wimber downplayed logic, "Wimber teaches, 'We must remember always that the Bible was written in the Middle East, not with rational assumption, that we bring to it as we try to understand it, but with an experiential assumption.'" (Randles, 81)

Quoting Wimber, Randles highlights Wimber's desire to go "beyond" in his theology, "Wimber calls us to 'know more personally the God who exists both beyond and within the boundaries of well defined doctrinal systems.'" (Randles, 82) "In the new paradigm, scripture is acknowledged and given lip service, but it is no longer the primary standard which measures spiritual reality." (Randles, 82)

John Wimber also helped people to feel at ease with false prophets: "Interestingly enough, in 1990, when the Kansas City Prophets began to be exposed as fraudulent, it was to Wimber that they went for 'correction.' But he never stopped promoting the erroneous teachings of Paul Cain, Mike Bickle, Bob Jones, John Paul Jackson. In 1991, he did stop promoting Bob Jones, but not because of heresy, but because of immorality." (Randles, 85-86)

David Cloud wrote, "True to his Quaker roots, Wimber was not satisfied with a life of faith; he wanted to 'feel God.'... He said, 'God uses our experiences to show us more fully what He teaches us in scripture, many times toppling or altering elements of our theology and world view. If my experience topples my theology, then I am giving more credence to my experience than to theology' (Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p. 89)." (www.wayoflife.org/database/wimber.html)

John Goodwin wrote of Wimber's ecumenism, "Wimber is not only open to Roman Catholic doctrine but actively encourages the reunification of

Protestants with the church of Rome. During a Vineyard pastors' conference, he went so far as to "apologize" to the Catholic church on behalf of , all Protestants. He asked an archbishop, from the Los Angeles archdiocese to stand up in the front of the auditorium and spoke these words to him, asking him as the representative of the Catholic church to accept his apology on behalf of all Protestants and asked for the church's[Catholic] forgiveness. He stated that 'the pope, who by the way is very responsive to the charismatic movement, and is himself a born again evangelical, is preaching the gospel as clear as anyone in the world today.'" (www.deceptioninthechurch.com/KJCVINEY.HTM)

Promoter of the Introverted Unbiblical: Richard Foster
Richard Foster is a Quaker pastor and the author of "Celebration of Discipline" and other books promoting mystical spirituality. "Perhaps the best known Quaker in the world today is Richard J. Foster, although many are at most dimly aware that he is associated with the Religious Society of Friends. He is clearly one of the leading contemporary writers and speakers on Christian spirituality. While maintaining his ties with Friends, Foster deliberately speaks to a much broader audience." (<http://www.quakerinfo.com/foster.shtml>)

Richard Foster is a popularizer of "contemplative prayer" and other mystical techniques. Author Ray Yungen defines "contemplative prayer" as, "Going beyond thought by the use of repeated words or phrases." (Yungen, 203) Roger Oakland warns against the dangers of this mystical type of praying, "The fact that Foster recognizes contemplative prayer is dangerous and opens the door to the fallen spirit world is very revealing. What is this-- praying to the God of the Bible but instead reaching demons? Maybe contemplative prayer should be renamed *contemplative terror*. While Foster has said repeatedly that contemplative prayer is for everyone, he contradicts himself when he says it is only for a select group and not for the 'novice.' He says not everyone is ready and equipped to listen to God's voice through the 'all embracing silence.' (Oakland, 100)

Giving two examples of related disciplines in Foster's books, Yungen writes, "In the original 1978 edition of *Celebration of Discipline*, he [Foster] makes his objective clear when he states, 'Christian meditation is an attempt to empty the mind in order to fill it.' In [Foster's] *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home* [1992], he ties in a quote by one mystic who advised, 'You must bind the mind with one thought.'" (Yungen, 75)

Foster's books contain many reckless endorsements of false teachers such as the following, explained by Yungen, "Richard Foster has written of [Thomas] Merton's mystical prayer in sparkling terms, saying, 'Thomas Merton has perhaps done more than any other twentieth-century figure to make the life of prayer widely known and understood.' Foster considers Merton's book, *Contemplative Prayer*, 'a must book.'" (Yungen, 77) Thomas Merton was a Catholic monk, who towards the end of his life said, "I see no contradiction between Buddhism and Christianity... I intend to become as good a Buddhist as I can." (Yungen, 77)

Modern Quakers (aka Friends)

On the website of the Friends General Conference, this shockingly ecumenical statement is made, "Many Quakers consider themselves Christian, and some do not. Many Quakers today draw spiritual nourishment from our Christian roots and strive to follow the example of Jesus. Many other Quakers draw spiritual sustenance from various religious traditions, such as Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and the nature religions. " (www.fgcquaker.org/explore/faqs-about-quakers#believe?)

George Fox left Quakers with a quicksand foundation, pointing them to the subjective leadings of the "Spirit" instead of the objective and sure Word of God. Predictably, this has resulted in numerous contradictory opinions among them, as well as in adding to and taking away from the Word of God. "Diverse theological beliefs, understandings of the 'leading of the Holy Spirit', and statements of 'faith and practice' have always existed among Friends. Due in part to the emphasis on the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, Quaker doctrines have only

sometimes been codified as statements of faith, confessions or theological texts..." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quakers>)

One of the more conservative branches of the Quakers is the Evangelical branch: "EFCI [Evangelical Friends Church International] claims to represent more than 140,000 Friends, equalling roughly 39% of the total number of Friends worldwide." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quakers>) "Because of evangelical Friends' origins within the Gurneyite faction during the 19th century series of schisms that divided the Society, some Evangelical Friends rely relatively less on the authority of the Inner Light and more on their belief in the authority of a literal reading of the Scripture." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Friends_Church_International) Even among the "evangelical" Quakers though, a lack of biblical adherence is evident.

For example, the biblical practice of baptism and communion have long been disputed issues among Quakers. Among the Conservative and Liberal branches, these are rejected: "Like Conservatives Friends, Liberal Friends reject religious symbolism and sacraments, such as water baptism and the Eucharist. While Liberal Friends recognize the potential of these outward forms for awakening experiences of the Inward Light of Christ, they are not part of their worship, and are unnecessary to authentic Christian spirituality." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quakers>) Among the "evangelical" Quakers baptism and communion are also seen as optional: "...several of the Yearly Meetings within the EFC do allow freedom of conscious in regards to participating in water baptism or in offering and receiving communion with in their churches." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Friends_Church_International)

"Within some Friends Churches in the Evangelical Friends Church, in particular in Rwanda, Burundi, and parts of the USA, an adult believer's baptism by immersion in water, is optional." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quakers>)

Jesus did not present communion and baptism as "optional" items. He gave commands regarding them, such as "this do in remembrance of

Me" (I Corinthians 11:24; Luke 22:19), and "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19)

Conclusion

To be truly evangelical, a Quaker would need to renounce the unbiblical origins of the Quaker movement, and its association with George Fox and his false doctrines. The Word of God is indeed our standard and light to show us what is correct doctrine-- not inner and subjective leadings. This kind of drift from God's Word has led to much error not only among the Quakers, but among various groups that depart from God's Word. Whether it's George Fox's advice of being led by the "Inner Light" in contrast to God's Word, or "Rodney Howard Browne's exhortations to 'shut off the mind' and enter into the Spirit [at the Toronto Airport Vineyard]." (Randles, 137), or Richard Foster quoting a mystic who encourages people to "...bind the mind with one thought." (Yungen, 75), it's the same lie rephrased-- such advice can result in charismatic chaos on the one hand or mystical misadventures on the other hand. In either case, God's Word has been set aside in order to chase after an unbiblical experience. Jesus said, "...If a man love me, he will keep my words..." (John 14:23).

Appendix 4

Other Modern Authors Pointing to Rome

The following is not a complete list of authors with mystical leanings, but just a few more examples among many that could have been selected....

Phyllis Tickle

True to her name, Phyllis Tickle, is false to Jesus' name, tickling the ears of modern audiences, and promoting various mystical authors. It should not be surprising then that her view of Scripture is not complimentary. Sandy Simpson quotes Tickle's disregard for Scripture and goes on to contrast this with Jesus' teachings: "'The new Christianity of the Great Emergence must discover some authority base or delivery system and/or governing agency of its own. It must formulate—and soon—something other than ***Luther's Sola Scriptura which, although used so well by the Great Reformation originally, is now seen as hopelessly outmoded or insufficient ...***' (Phyllis Tickle, *The Great Emergence*, pg. 151)

Ironically, Jesus Christ claims that adherence to His Words will set us free rather than put us into bondage under a 'paper pope.' John 8:31-32 'So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" (www.deceptioninthechurch.com/ecsola-scriptura.html)

Also, Phyllis Tickle was invited to speak at Rob Bell's emergent church in Michigan, and she had the following to say about communion: "We are feeding, by eating God, which is what we're doing here, by eating the body and blood of our God, we are feeding the God within us, for as we take those elements, the Spirit also feeds within us and is reinvigorated as he or she or it is by our faith." (www.alittleleaven.com/2009/05/whats-being-taught-at-rob-bell.html) Tickle was one of the people chosen by Renovare to select the "25 Books Every Christian Should Read." Is it not the blind leading the blind, when a person who does not know if the Holy Spirit is a he, she, or an it, and who thinks we can be "feeding the God within us," is the one recommending what to read?

Peter Scazzero

Orrel Steinkamp, in *The Plumblin*, Volume 15, No. 6, Dec 2010, wrote, "Scazzero's stated mission is to introduce Catholic contemplative prayer and practice to evangelicals. Scazzero avoids the term Catholic for obvious reasons but uses 'Contemplative Prayer' freely, assuming probably correctly, that evangelicals will not know the meaning of the term. Scazzero's book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* recounts how after his seminary experience at Gordon-Conwell, he launched into growing an evangelical church in Queens. However, as the years went by, his marriage nearly collapsed and his time consuming ministry was brought to a standstill. I am not sure why he and his wife Geri took a 6 month sabbatical and visited monasteries overseas including Taizé in France. They came home, however, converted to Contemplative Spirituality (henceforth CS). They assumed that their church would refuse this but the elders were open to try it. The rest is history. They implemented a Benedictine Daily Office devotional routine, a Sabbath experience and a Rule for Life. All of this is presented as the solution to Scazzero's insufficient experience in traditional evangelical spirituality....

He quotes primarily from famous Catholic monastic mystics both living and dead, and he proudly announces that he attends a Trappist monastery in MS on a regular basis participating in the rigors of monastic life. It appears that his audiences have no problems with the source of his material. Trappist monks, and other emergent universalists get generous quotes in his writings and are ALWAYS quoted favorably. One can only assume he sees their teaching found in their writings as beneficial and that his evangelical audiences either don't care or know to whom he refers in his writings....

Many evangelicals are convinced CS is just a way to slow down and have quiet devotions in a busy life style. But for people who know, - it is not remotely like a quiet bible study. It would only take a few minutes on a computer to establish that CS is not really an option. Thomas Merton and Henri Nouwen, the big two of monastic mystics leave no doubt that 'entering the silence' is essentially an eastern way of

eliminating all conscious thought so that we can uncover God's presence already buried deep in all humans and in all living things (panentheism). Scazzero's quotes are from nearly all the luminaries of CS. But he does not go on to describe in detail their practices and teachings, however. This is unfortunate for very quickly that would nail down a few undeniable features of CS. First by meditative techniques and disciplines there is a desire to reach an alternate state of spiritual consciousness in which unknowing rather than knowing is the goal. In past centuries that monastic goal often took years to attain.

But in recent times Father Thomas Keating, quoted freely by Scazzero (Thomas Keating, *Intimacy With God: An Introduction To Centering Prayer*, in *Daily Office* by Scazzero, p. 44) along with Father M. Basil Bennington [famous quote: 'The soul of the human family is the Holy Spirit'], found a way to attain mental silence and unknowing in about 20 minutes. Father Keating attended the 6th annual Christian-Buddhist meditation Conference recently. Here he presented this centering prayer short cut to 'Nirvana' to Asian Buddhist monks. Father Keating was praised as a good bridge between Christianity and Buddhism. An attendee stated that his centering prayer seemed to tie in with Transcendental Meditation, yoga mantra meditation, the Jesus prayer and Hindu readings on meditation. Tilden Edwards, founder of Shalem Institute who is also quoted in Scazzero's book, p. 170, states in his book that 'This mystical stream (CS) is the western bridge to Far Eastern spirituality' (*Spiritual Friend*, NY, NY, Paulist Press, 1980, p. 18).

Scazzero on page 160 of his book recommends centering prayer. He states: 'I often spend 5 minutes centering down...I follow James Findley's guidelines...' (James Findley is a former Trappist Monk and promoter of inter-spiritual contemplative monk Thomas Merton.) Relying on James Findley, Scazzero's book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* states: 'Sit still, Sit strait, Breath slowly and deeply...When you find your mind wandering, let your breathing bring your mind back...' (p. 160,161)." (www.4truthministry.com/navigation/orrel_steinkamp_scazzero.php)

"The following contemplative proponents are quoted and/or favorably referenced in Scazzero's *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*: Dallas Willard, Meister Eckhart, Teresa of Avila, Thomas Merton, Daniel Goleman (scientist who studies and promotes Buddhist meditation), Richard Foster, Brennan Manning, Ignatius of Loyola, Basil Pennington, Tony Jones, Phyllis Tickle, Henri Nouwen, and "Brother" Lawrence. (www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/blog/?p=1148)

Gary Thomas

One contemplative spirituality book recommended by Rick Warren is Gary Thomas' book *Sacred Pathways*. In that book Thomas promotes centering prayer which he describes as follows: "In general however, centering prayer works like this: Choose a word (Jesus or Father for example) as a focus for contemplative prayer. Repeat the word silently in your mind for a set amount of time (say, 20 minutes) until your heart seems to be repeating the word by itself, just as naturally and involuntarily as breathing." (Yungen, 152)

After recommending various Catholic authors on his website, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, Ignatius of Loyola, John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Madame Guyon, and "Brother" Lawrence, Gary Thomas suggests, "Around the country, if your favorite Christian bookstore doesn't carry a desired title, look for: Roman Catholic bookstores, which are more likely to carry many of these titles..." (www.garythomas.com/free-resources/other-christian-classics/)

"In his [Gary Thomas'] book *Sacred Marriage* (a book that Focus on the Family stands by and sells on their website), Thomas introduces readers to a woman named Mary Anne McPherson Oliver and to her book *Conjugal Spirituality*. Thomas favorably references Oliver several times throughout *Sacred Marriage* and also references Oliver on his website in a *Sacred Marriage* study guide. Who is Mary Anne McPherson Oliver and why should Christians be concerned about Gary Thomas' promotion of this woman's book, *Conjugal Spirituality*? This mysticism that Oliver encourages is experienced through 'bodily exercises'.... Listen to some of her instructions in what she describes as 'intercourse on all levels of

consciousness'....

2. '...contact the core energy of the other and experience the enlarging of the oval inhabited by the divine presence' (p. 91).

3. Yin and Yang movements

4. 'Concentrate in the stillness and silence' (p. 93)....

6. 'Meditate using the five senses. Experience the circuit of energy circling slowly through the joined bodies' (p. 93).

7. 'Focus a few minutes on the breath as a sign of the Spirit's activity within yourself' (p.102).

8. 'Repeat name or 'I love you' as a mantra' (p. 102).

In *Conjugal Spirituality*, Oliver talks favorably about mystic Teilhard de Chardin's Omega Point and the 'Indian Tantric Yoga tradition ... spoken of as kundalini potential energy' (p. 97). She describes public sexual ceremonies in which couples practice 'Taoist visualizations and meditations, accompanied by breathing exercises' and talks of '[i]nvoking the gods and goddesses.'.... It is important to realize here that when Gary Thomas read Oliver's book, he resonated with it. This is not guilt by association, but rather guilt by promotion." (www.lighthouse-trailsresearch.com/newsletter060908.htm)

How bad does a book have to be before a Christian will reject it? When Roman Catholic techniques and techniques from Eastern Religions are so blatantly promoted in these books, we should "mark them" and "avoid them" as Paul commended us to do (Romans 16:17-18), having no fellowship with devils to which the Gentiles sacrifice (I Corinthians 10:20-21). These are "unfruitful works of darkness" which we are called to reprove (Ephesians 5:11), and "a form of godliness" which denies "the power thereof" from which we are supposed to turn away (II Timothy 3:5). Roman Catholicism denies the power and sufficiency of the cross of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sins, adding mystical forms of prayer and sacramental works, following the doctrines of men and thus worshipping God in vain (Matthew 15:9). To bid Godspeed to such books which do not bring the doctrine of the Bible, is to become partakers of their evil deeds (2 John 1:10-11). How bad does a book have to be before a Christian will "sigh and that cry for all the abominations" (Ezekiel 9:4)?

Appendix 5

IHOP: Mystical Dominion

In Mark Cahill's January 2015 newsletter, he wrote, "I was talking with a pastor this year, and he was encouraging me not to judge things. He said it was more important to look at the fruit of something. He said it is best to eat the meat and then spit out the bones! He started mentioning things like Heaven Is For Real, Joel Osteen, IHOP, and Bill Johnson. What amazed me is that all of the ministries he listed have serious problems with their theology. So my response was, 'No! We need to be judging things.'.... John 7:24: 'Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.' You see, we are supposed to be judging. We are just supposed to be judging righteously. It is easy to say that those books or ministries listed above are into false teaching. Why? Because I just take what they say and compare it against the Word of God. Simple. And because many of us are not judging by Biblical standards anymore, it is easier for anyone or any church to fall into Biblical error."

With this in mind, the following are some excerpts regarding IHOP (the International House of Prayer) and their misguided teachings. This is not just a matter of spitting out the bones. Bones do need to be spit out, but the chemical composition of bones is not poisonous. A better comparison for such doctrines would be arsenic mixed into a sandwich, which it would be better not to even eat, rather than trying to work around the (spiritually) deadly arsenic.

Some excerpts from part I of Sarah Leslie's article "The PASSION of the PRESENCE & the Purpose of the Passion" (<http://standupforthetruth.com/2014/03/ihops-scary-presence-doctrine-part-i/>):

Altered States, History and End Times Dominion

"Recently Warren Smith published a book in which he made us aware of an increasingly popular belief that Christians can invoke the 'presence' of 'God' (or 'Jesus') by their contemplative activities. But there is another practice of 'presence' that is taking the evangelical world by storm. In the

IHOP/NAR [New Apostolic Reformation] the passionate invocation of the 'presence' (which they call the 'Spirit') isn't just done via contemplative meditation. They believe that the 'presence' is achieved via the elaborate staging of flashy lighting, noisy music and hypnotic manipulations in the context of what they call 'worship.' The clear intent is to create an altered state of consciousness – a spiritual/emotive state in which the participant is susceptible to heretical suggestions..."

"This is IHOP's most alluring tenet: God needs IHOPers to effect the Tribulation and bring Christ back to Earth. 'The church causes the Great Tribulation,' Bickle has preached."

"Keep in mind that even though in recent years Bickle has tried to distance himself from the more aggressive military aspects of this judgment, his Latter Rain associates have continued with their violent prophecies and rhetoric. A related IHOP heresy involves a corruption of a familiar Bible verse, Ps. 22:3 which states: *'But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.'* They teach that God's 'presence' actually 'inhabits' their worship. The more fervent, frenzied and feverish their worship, the more God's 'presence' will come down and 'inhabit' them."

"Mike Bickle was part of the Kansas City prophets that influenced John Wimber and Vineyard into numerous new ways to do church.... Mike Bickle is now part of Wagner's prophet and apostle movement (New Apostolic Reformation [NAR]).... John Wimber became an overseer of the KC group in the late 1980s when their cult excesses became public and controversial, and set them up under his Vineyard denomination."

"This history of John Wimber's association with IHOP becomes important because Bickle held a very specific view about the necessary 'purpose' for generating extreme 'passion' in an 'army' of impressionable youth. This youthful army was destined, according to their Latter Rain prophets, to become the foot-soldiers for Dominionism on earth."

"This army generation was referred to in racial terms as 'the best of every blood line in the earth' and 'superior' to every other 'seed' on earth. Bickle explained that there would be a 'time of war and transitioning of whole new orders in the body.' These Latter Rain leaders teach that their New Breed of Elect Seeds will be an endtime Joel's Army."

"Joel's Army, a booklet published by Discernment Ministries online, which discusses the eschatology of the 'Kansas City Prophets' in detail, explains that 'The 'Day of the Lord' is re-interpreted by [these] false prophets to mean that Christ will come to His Church and incarnate (become God in flesh) an army of believers – thus giving them supernatural qualities to execute judgment on the Church.'"

"When emotional feelings become the doctrine of God's Presence, then God has been reduced to a 'gnosis' form of Presence.... An emotional experience, especially a repetitive one during a worship service, if not kept in proper perspective or check, can lead to an altered state of consciousness in which the capacity for rational reasoning is greatly reduced. At this point the congregation is open to delusion and can be easily led astray. In many charismatic groups an altered state of mind is explained as 'getting into the Spirit' or as a manifestation of the presence of God. Uncontrolled spiritual feelings transcend sound scriptural rationalism and give rise to the doctrine of 'the Presence of God' built on an experience."

Lending Credibility to False Doctrines

"In my opinion IHOP is using Francis Chan's comments at One Thing as propaganda in order to borrow Chan's credibility within the wider evangelical community and promote their leader Mike Bickle. How foolish of Francis Chan to just gush enthusiastically: 'I go, man, there's a lot of great things going on [at IHOP]. And today was the first time I ever met Mike Bickle. And, I love that guy. I do. ...there's people who told me not to hang out with him. 'Like, you know, words like 'creepy' came up. And yet, I get to know this guy and I'm going, 'Man, I love his heart. And I just want to publicly say I love Mike Bickle.'"

"Why are Francis Chan, John Piper, Matt Chandler and other prominent teachers placing themselves on center stage (literally) of these IHOP-orchestrated mass rallies? Superficially, one might assume that it is merely for the immediate stardom and pizzazz that comes with such celebrity status in a youth event rocking with fervor, bright lighting, and loud acclamations. *What an ego trip!* But is it conceivable that these leaders also happen to agree with some of the IHOP doctrine? After all, it is impossible to separate the activities at these youth events without encountering the foundational beliefs that give rise to them."

"Of course, it can be argued that just because an esteemed evangelical leader shares the stage with adherents and promoters of these IHOP/NAR doctrines doesn't mean he/she agrees with their teaching. However, it is important to note that an evangelical leader's very appearance at these events lends legitimacy and credibility to this movement – a movement that has been aggressively attempting to distance itself from its former cult status, remake its image and become respectable."

"It is time for a hefty dose of sanity and sobriety in the evangelical world. One must wonder if those seemingly naïve evangelical leaders (e.g., Piper, Chan) are associating with a well-known cult (which has an historical record of teaching Gnostic mysticism and advocating endtime punitive violence) merely for fame and fortune, or are they perhaps also drawn to the mystical experiences of the IHOP/NAR leaders in these youth movements. Either way, they are playing with fire – strange fire."

In part II of Sarah Leslie's article "The PASSION of the PRESENCE & the Purpose of the Passion" (<http://herescope.blogspot.com/2014/02/presence-eschatology.html>), she wrote...

Joel's Army, the Trinity, and Corporate Manifestation

"NAR and IHOP leaders teach that there will be an 'increasing' return of this Spirit/'Presence' which will release a special 'glory' anointing on the church to equip the powerful mobilization of an endtime 'Joel's Army' to take dominion over the earth."

"The belief that Jesus Christ will first come as a 'Spirit' or 'Presence' alters foundational doctrines about Christ and the Trinity (Rom.1:3-4). It ignores (or discounts) that Jesus is coming again in His resurrected body (Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:27, etc.). It is not unlike Docetism, a heresy in the early church that denied that Jesus Christ came the first time in the flesh.... This isn't talking about the indwelling Holy Spirit in the life of an individual believer. Rather, they believe in a *separate* 'filling' by a coming 'Presence' that results in a *corporate* 'God-man' or 'Perfect Man.' Hence their misapplication of the phrase '*manifestation of the sons of God*' from Romans 8:19."

"There is actually quite a bit of confusion in IHOP and NAR documents about the 'Spirit of Jesus' and the 'Holy Spirit.' When they talk about the 'Spirit' they often mean this secondary 'Presence' that they are trying to invoke by their 24/7 prayers. Ironically, they downplay the actual Holy Spirit—especially His indwelling presence already promised to believers. Instead they insist that their followers must perform all sorts of extrabiblical exotic rituals, frenzied antics, pronounced decrees and shouting declarations in order to summon more of the 'Presence' of this 'Spirit.'"

"Their 'Spirit' is not the Holy Spirit. And Jesus Christ is not returning as a 'Spirit.' As Dr. Steinkamp has astutely observed: 'Jesus has not become the Holy Spirit. It is rather the Holy Spirit who indwells the believer. The Resurrected Jesus is at the Father's right hand and in His glorified resurrected body He will return bodily to the earth. Obviously an indwelling spirit would not need to return from heaven. It is on this basis that some Dominion teachers assert that Jesus can be an on-going incarnation of God in His body (church) upon the earth. Consequently scriptures pertaining to Christ's ruling on earth are often seen as referring the Church rather than Jesus.'"

"The old Latter Rain/MSOG teachers used their own unique terminology to describe their unorthodox views. Likewise, the IHOP/NAR has its own special 'in-house' (pun intended) language. It can be very difficult for the 'uninitiated' to wade through their gilded spiritual-speak.

Nevertheless, once one understands the complex verbiage, it becomes clear that the original heresies about the 'Manifest Sons of God' have been modernized for popular consumption."

"By the late 1980s the Latter Rain teachings became fully embedded in the doctrines of the movement that has now become widely known as IHOP and NAR. In 1990, just as the 'Kansas City Prophets' coalesced with John Wimber of Vineyard and C. Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary (who later set up the NAR[44]), Discernment Ministries published an astonishing report about a 1989 Vineyard Conference where these old Latter Rain cult doctrines were being resurrected. The report summarized what was being said: 'They believe they will become Christ corporately and individually. When you hear someone say, as Mike Bickle (from Kansas City Fellowship speaking at a Vineyard Conference in 1989) said, 'Christ is the Alpha and we are the Omega,' you immediately realize this is not Scriptural—only Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. What is it then? Manifest Sons of God... i.e., we are Christ corporately...'"

Orrel *Steinkamp* in his Plumblane publication further points out the skewed theology of IHOP (<http://www.deceptioninthechurch.com/orrel34.pdf>):

Strange Bridal Doctrines

"After the waning of the Kansas City Prophets, Bickle's next spiritual enterprise was IHOP and its foundational teaching was prophetic praise around the clock 24/7 based on the Latter-Rain teaching called the 'Tabernacle of David.' Its expression is that of singers and musicians released to lead corporate intercession. This model of David's Tabernacle is seen as an end time worship/warfare scheme that the elite will use to stimulate God to move so that the church can take dominion of the earth. TOD teaching is not new at all but was clearly a part of the restoration teaching of the Latter-Rain teachers."

"Bickle employs the Song of Solomon with its sensual emotions and affections as the interpretive key for an intimate Bridal intimacy and

identity. Bickle promotes Jesus as an emotional lover of individual Christians."

"From a book that is required reading at the Kansas City Prayer Center we read: 'He [God] has given Himself to both the exhilarations and the woundings of a lovesick heart. When He gazes on me, He sees through the eyes of love and desire. He comes before me and says, 'I am a Man in love. I am a God that burns with desire, and I have set My affections on you. I am an all-consuming fire of love. And you are the inheritance that my Father has promised me. Will you receive my love? (Pg.57)... She lifted her arms wide to the Lord and said with all her strength and her love, 'Enjoy me, right here, right now, in my absolute weakness, enjoy me.' (Pg. 84)"

"This Bridal Intimacy theme has been percolating for some time now. Back in January 6, 2002 at the 'The Call' thousands of young people took public marriage vows to Jesus."

"The Bible tells us that the Marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven and only at the Day of Redemptions when all believers are gathered in.... One will search in vain at IHOP to find any serious teaching of foundational biblical truths such as: the fall, sin and grace, the resurrection, and the trinity. In fact, Bickle's only reference to the trinity glosses over the trinity in order to endorse Branham who denied the trinity. Rather, in the IHOP bookstore, there is a whole wall devoted to Catholic mystics, modern prophesies, spiritual warfare techniques and spiritual mapping. Bickle also claims John G. Lake, as the most important influence in his life next to Christ, and the greatest intercessor in history. This despite Lake's little gods teaching, communication with the dead and being arrested for fraud. AT IHOP THE MAIN THINGS ARE NOT THE MAIN THING."

* * * * *

On IHOP's website bookstore they sell books by promoters of mysticism such as Dallas Willard, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Catholic

priest Thomas Dubay, Catholic bishop Alphonsus Maria de' Liguori, Catholic bishop Francis de Sales, Richard Foster, Henri Nouwen, "Brother" Lawrence, Therese of Lisieux, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Madame Guyon; as well as books by false teachers such as Kathryn Kuhlman, Rick Joyner, Bill Johnson, John G. Lake, David Yonggi Cho, T.D. Jakes (who does not believe in the trinity), Joyce Meyer, and others (<https://store.ihopkc.org>).

Contemplative spirituality includes a wide variety of unbiblical techniques of prayer and worship which give an impressive appearance of having great zeal and wisdom, but we are not supposed to judge based on appearance, but in righteousness, according to the Bible. "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:2-3)

Along with the false mystical techniques come all manner of false doctrines. This is not something that can be casually spit out, but is spiritual arsenic, and something we should not be bidding God speed to at all. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 1:9-11)

Appendix 6

The Titanic: Redemption in the Midst of a Shipwreck

"John Harper [a Baptist pastor from Glasgow, Scotland] had...spent three months ministering at Moody Church in Chicago, during which time the church had experienced 'one of the most wonderful revivals in its history.' He had not been back in Britain long, however, when he was asked to return and continue his ministry. Harper quickly made arrangements for himself and his six-year-old daughter, Nana, to travel back to America on board the *Lusitania* but decided to delay their departure for one week so that they could sail on a new ship which was about to make its maiden voyage-- the *Titanic*.

The *Titanic* struck an iceberg at 11:40 pm on April 14, 1912. As the call was issued for passengers to vacate their cabins, Harper wrapped his daughter in a blanket, told her that she would see him again one day, and passed her to one of the crewmen. After watching her safely board one of the lifeboats, he removed his life-jacket and gave it to one of the other passengers. One survivor distinctly remembered hearing him shout, 'Women, children, and the unsaved into the lifeboats!' Harper then ran along the decks pleading with people to turn to Christ, and, with the ship sinking, he called upon the *Titanic* 's orchestra to play, 'Nearer, My God, to Thee.' Gathering people around him on deck, he then knelt down, and 'with holy joy in his face,' raised his arms in prayer. As the ship began to lurch, he jumped into the icy waters and swam frantically to all he could reach, beseeching them to turn to the Lord Jesus and be saved. Finally, as hypothermia set in, John Harper sank beneath the waters and passed into the Lord's presence. He was 39.

"Four years later, a young Scotsman by the name of Aguilla Webb stood up in a meeting in Hamilton, Canada, and gave the following testimony:

I am a survivor of the *Titanic* . When I was drifting alone on a spar that awful night, the tide brought Mr. John Harper of Glasgow, also on a piece of the wreck, near me. 'Man,' he said, 'are you saved?'

'No,' I said, 'I am not.' He replied, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' The waves bore him away; but, strange to say, brought him back a little later, and he said, 'Are you saved now?' 'No,' I said, 'I cannot honestly say that I am.' He said again, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' and shortly after, he went down; and there, alone in the night, and with two miles of water under me, I believed. I am John Harper's last convert.

In a tribute to Harper, which was published in 1912 under the heading, 'The Three Themes of a Hero,' William Andrew of Glasgow noted that the three themes of John Harper's preaching had been 'the Cross of Christ, God's marvelous grace to man, and the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'" (www.thebereancall.org/content/november-2010-extra)

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