



# Christian Yoga...?

Hinduism invaded the West full force in the early 1970's in the form of Transcendental Meditation, Yoga and other Eastern mystical practices under the guise of science, health and education. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the Beatles popularized these practices. Since then they have become permanently enmeshed in the fabric of American life. Over the past 3 decades Eastern philosophy and practices have even slithered into the Evangelical church. The most blatant example is the fact that Yoga is being practiced, advocated and taught more and more in Evangelical churches, schools and programs. But what is Yoga? Rabi Maharaj, who grew up in India and got saved out of the false religion of Hinduism, warns Christians in his book, *The Death of a Guru*, saying "there is no yoga without Hinduism and there is no Hinduism without yoga." Those words come from a former Hindu yogi. We should heed his warning. Some hard, cold facts about Yoga to ponder: 1) 'Yoga' means 'to yoke'—to yoke your identity with the Hindu serpent goddess *Kundalini* through physical straining and Hindu meditation on a *mantra* (the name of a Hindu god). 2) Yoga came from the Hindu religion—the goal is to position your body in specific ways to evoke a response from Kundalini whom they believe resides at the bottom of the spine in the human body. Through physical gyrations and stretches—Yoga—they believe they can arouse and evoke Kundalini to travel up the spine, regulating 'prana' (mystical life energy) and opening the body's alleged psychic centers, finally reaching the top 'chakra', permitting the merging of Shiva/Shakti and occult enlightenment. 3) The *Oxford American Dictionary* defines 'yoga' this way: "a Hindu system of meditation and self-control designed to produce mystical experience and spiritual insight"—pretty straightforward. 4) Yoga is to be practiced along with *mantra* meditation, which is the Hindu practice of repeating the name of one of their gods in an attempt to alter your state of consciousness—scary stuff. The Bible says to "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" and to "think on things that are true" and "to love the Lord with all your mind"—not fill it with Hindu mysticism. That's dangerous. Philippians 4 promises freedom from "anxiety," true "peace of mind" and the very "peace of God" regarding our emotions and thought life. An amazing promise. But how do we get peace of mind? Paul tells us in this passage it is through "prayer"—talking to God—worshipping Him, thanking Him for all He has done, and for praying for the needs of others. The key is getting our eyes off of ourselves. Regular communication with the true God of the universe through the person of Jesus in prayer is the biblical option for true peace and health of mind that so many are naively and dangerously seeking through Hindu Yoga.



This month's dirty word is... **Theology**. Many Christians say they don't like, understand or need **theology**. Rather, they say they just want to love Jesus and be spiritual—they say **theology** is the big bad wolf of religion. But this is a false dichotomy---**theology** and loving Jesus are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, one can only truly love Jesus if one first has correct **theology** about who Jesus is and what real love is. Contrary to many, **theology** is not a bad word—it is a compound word from *theos* [God] plus *logos* meaning 'discourse' or 'teaching.' So **theology** is teaching about God, teaching about truth. Jesus said we need **theology**---biblical **theology**. He said, "know the truth and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32). Biblical **theology** is biblical truth, biblical principles, biblical teaching. And it is through biblical teaching-truth-principles that we grow as Christians...it is through biblical truth, or **theology**, that God saved us (1 Peter 1:23). So, who's afraid of the big, bad wolf....?

# CLIFF'S NOTES

RANDOM MUSINGS ABOUT "WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?" PAST AND PRESENT  
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GBF is 20 weeks old today! Just a tad over 4 months; still just a fragile baby, but becoming more functional, stable...and cute. God continues to graciously meet all of our needs above and beyond all that we can imagine. Some vital signs: we have 21 formal members; we've averaged 68 people each Sunday; we have had 1st time visitors every Sunday since we started; we've had over 230 people attend our church at least once; we had our first Christmas Eve candlelight service as a church; we are on the verge of starting a home Bible study ministry; we are ready to have our first ever baptismal service next week; we see spiritual growth and excitement in many of our youth and children and we have an unusually high percentage of saints involved in regular ministry. Amen!

## EMERGING RE-EMERGING

This is the fourth month in a row that I am talking about the Emerging Church—that's because it is the most dominant movement in the Christian world today...and it will be for the next couple years. Fads and movements come and go. In the late '80's *Promise Keepers* was the craze; in the '90's it was all about "church growth"; in early 2000 everything was "purpose driven"; now it looks like for a while it will be the *Emerging Bandwagon*. Emerging influence, teaching and practice is everywhere—many times unbeknownst to the very people who are implementing it or going along for the ride. But we need to be discerning about this movement. Its foundation is based upon neo-orthodox and liberal Christian thinking. That's not good. Become familiar with the basic nuances of Emerging for your own edification. 1 Thessalonians 5 commands us "to examine everything carefully." That means "investigate, scrutinize, put to the test." To help to that end see my ongoing review of Emerging at <http://fromthestudy.wordpress.com>-- Other excellent reviews can be found at <http://www.challies.com/archives/000712.php> and <http://www.crosswalk.com/news/weblogs/mohler/1313087.html>

Websites of the month: [www.wayofthemaster.com](http://www.wayofthemaster.com); [www.NANC.org](http://www.NANC.org); [www.normgeisler.com](http://www.normgeisler.com).



## Heaven or Hell?

With the recent deaths of President Ford and James Brown, the world had another opportunity to talk about the afterlife. But in all the news programming on TV and on radio surrounding the death of these two men, I never heard anyone talk about "where" they went when they died. All the focus was on how they lived and the legacy they left. But the most important question—the eternal question—is where are Ford and Brown now. I know. The Bible tells us...they are either in heaven or hell. Those are the only two options. It's that simple. The Bible says "it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). And Jesus said unbelievers "will go away into eternal punishment [which is 'hell'], but the righteous into eternal life [heaven]" (Matthew 25:46)