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**CHRISTIANS & YOGA FOR HEALTH REASONS.**

*Challenge Xtra! May 2012*

**Taken from TBC (4/1/12)** *Question: Recently I joined a yoga class for fitness and relaxation. During the class, mantras are used. The teacher explained the meanings such as “all is truth.” Is it wrong to participate in these mantras? Can I just substitute Christian words such as “Jesus”? Or should I not participate in the class at all? Everyone I have asked seems to think there is no problem with this but I feel uncomfortable and do not know why.*

**Response:** I am glad that you feel uncomfortable about being involved in yoga. Drop the class immediately! Yoga is the very heart of Hinduism. It is sold in the West as science but in fact is religion. It is promoted in the West as beneficial to health, but in the East it is a technique for dying. The goal is to reach *moksha*, allegedly escaping the world of illusion (*maya*) of time and sense into liberation from the endless cycle of birth and death and rebirth through reincarnation. The latter is another of Satan’s appealing lies that offers endless chances by denying God’s declaration that it is “appointed unto man once to die” (Hebrews 9:27). Many Roman Catholic priests and nuns practice yoga, and some who have become deeply involved in Eastern mysticism of various kinds, such as Thomas Merton, are highly honored among Catholics.

Yoga is a sanskrit word that means “yoking” and refers to union with Brahman, the ultimate god in Hinduism. The goal of yoga is “self-realization,” to realize that *atman*, the individual soul, is identical with Brahman, the universal soul, i.e., that you and god are one; indeed, that you are god but just don’t know it and need, through yoga, to discover this great “truth.” Your yoga teacher will probably deny all of this, but he (or she) cannot deny that this practice comes from Hinduism. It was not invented in the West. Yoga was introduced by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita as the sure way to the Hindu heaven. Shiva, one of the most feared Hindu deities, known as The Destroyer, is addressed as Yogeshwara, which means “Lord of Yoga.” Hatha yoga, known as physical yoga, is alleged to be devoid of the mysticism in other forms. Not so. One of the most authoritative hatha yoga texts, the fifteenth-century *Hathayoga-Pradipika*, declares that Lord Shiva was the first hatha yoga teacher. As for the mantras, if one of them means “all is truth,” that should give you the pantheistic Hindu connection. You know that all is not truth; indeed, this very idea is a satanic lie! Substitute “Jesus” as your “Christian mantra”? No! Any mantra (like the Catholic rosary) violates Christ’s command to “use not vain repetitions as the heathen” (Matthew 6:7). I don’t know what mantras you have been taught, but the fact is that true yoga mantras are all the names of Hindu gods. Furthermore, the greatest yoga teachers all declare that the repetition of a mantra is a call to that god (i.e., the demon it represents) to come and possess the meditator. I have interviewed people who became demon possessed through yoga. The great yogis all warn of the grave dangers involved, even though at the same time they promote the alleged benefits.

Yes, you could benefit physically from stretching your muscles, etc. However, the spiritual price you pay is not worth it. If you are interested in physical fitness, then practice exercises designed for that, not those designed specifically for achieving union with Brahman!

One of the most popular forms of yoga in the West is Transcendental Meditation (TM). Maharishi Mahesh Yogi at first introduced TM to the West as a Hindu religious practice. He openly taught that its purpose was to produce in the meditators' bodies "soma," a legendary substance that would allegedly feed and awaken the pantheon of Hindu gods. But when TM was excluded from public schools and government funding, Maharishi quickly and dishonestly deleted all reference to religion and began presenting TM as pure science. Such deliberate deceit says much about Maharishi's integrity. Nothing was changed except the labels. Former TMers have filed lawsuits asking millions of dollars in damages because of the traumas they suffered through the practice of TM. More recently, TM has practically taken over the town of Fairfield, Iowa, where Maharishi University of Management is located. The latest push in the promotion of TM comes from television personality Dr. Mehmet Oz. This protégé of Oprah Winfrey is a national spokesman for Transcendental Meditation, as well as being a medical advisor/teacher in Rick Warren's "Daniel Plan," an alleged biblical health and fitness program begun at Saddleback Church. The curriculum features occult meditation advocated by Oz and two other medical consultants.

Ed. I have read of any number of Fundamental Baptist churches that have yoga classes just for exercise purposes. But this is a delusion, as stated above, yoga is a part of the Hindu religion. I wonder what in the world Bible-believing (?) pastors are doing by introducing their people to this sort of thing. It certainly shows that there is no understanding of what is involved here. It reminds me of all the Fundamental Baptists that are engaged in *Christian psychology*. It is an oxymoron - the two are oppsites. One of the things we are constantly warned about in the Scriptures is being like the world. All one has to do is read the Old Testament to see that being like, and joining the world was one of Israel's greatest sins. They often adopted worship of the gods of the heathen.. The Word of God says, **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"** ~*II Corinthians 6:14, 15*. I know many will say that this is much ado about nothing, but they are sorely deceived. This is a great issue and problem as is *Christian Psychology*! Many Christians have had their minds messed up by both of them. God says, **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."** ~*Romans 12:2*. We are told to have the mind of Christ! The only way I know to have the **"mind of Christ"** (Philippians 2:5) is to fill it with Scripture. Of course, you must do more than memorize it – you must obey it! **"Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee."** ~*Psalms 119:11*.

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This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but **thou shalt meditate therein** day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. ~*Joshua 1:8*

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Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 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**. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. ~*Philippians 4:6-9*