

6 Ways Eastern Meditation Differs From Biblical Meditation

We live in a very stressed-out culture that is constantly looking for ways to unwind and de-stress. Just about any doctor or health expert will tell you to do one thing: meditate.

By meditate they mean an Eastern form of meditation: Zen meditation, transcendental meditation, yoga, Chinese or Hindu meditation, guided meditation—all of which have their origins in new age and Eastern religions.

But the meditation God was talking about in Joshua 1:8 differs greatly from Eastern meditation. In fact, I'll go so far as to say that participating in any form of meditation, apart from biblical meditation, is opening the door wide to the enemy.

I shared a little about this in my earlier post: Will God Protect You From Adult Coloring Books, when we looked at the adult coloring books with mandalas and why this is a dangerous practice for Christians.

Any time we mix Christian discipline with any other religious practice, we anger God.

In the Old Testament, God said this:

When the Lord your God shall cut off the nations from before you, where you go to possess them, and you dispossess them, and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself so that you are not ensnared by following them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you not inquire after their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods? Even so I will do likewise." You shall not do so to the Lord your

God, for every abomination to the Lord, which He hates, they have done to their gods. They have even burned their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.

Whatever I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it or take away from it (Deut. 12:29-32).

Throughout the Bible, God calls himself “jealous.”

He has commanded us to keep our worship pure and undefiled by the worship of other gods. You may argue, “But I’m not using these other forms of meditation for worship.” However, as Christians, whatever we do in our life *should* be to glorify God, and if anything we’re doing does *not* glorify God—but, in fact, is used to glorify another god—we should immediately reject it and eliminate it from our lives.

This includes yoga, which many Christians engage in as a stress-relieving form of exercise. When you examine its origins and meaning, you can easily see why yoga has no place in the life of the believer.

However, like any other Christian discipline, biblical meditation should be part of our daily practice: speaking the Word, muttering it to ourselves, mulling over it and imagining how our lives should fit in its context.

This takes the Word to a much deeper level than reading, studying, praying and even memorizing as we contemplate deeply what each passage actually means for us personally and speaking it over and over to ourselves.

6 Ways Eastern Meditation Differs From Biblical Meditation

1. Eastern meditation empties the mind. Biblical meditation fills the mind and spirit with God’s Word. Emptying our mind is actually a very dangerous thing because it gives the enemy room to fill it with his deception. However, the Hebrew word

for “meditation” means “to speak or mutter,” a practice that does the opposite of Eastern meditation. It fills our mind with God’s Word and builds our spirit.

2. Eastern meditation focuses on self: centering yourself; your inner self; self-actualization; your breathing, physical feelings and emotions. The enemy will do anything to get us to stop focusing on Christ. Furthermore, his ultimate deception is pride or elevation of self. Biblical meditation takes our focus off ourselves and places it on Jesus Christ.

3. Eastern meditation seeks to relieve stress. The problem with our culture isn’t stress. Stress is only a symptom of a deeper problem: pride. Worry, fear, perfectionism—these all have their root in pride, and all result in stress. But God wants us to daily walk in faith that brings us peace no matter our circumstance. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

Christians absolutely shouldn’t turn to anything other than Jesus Christ for the peace that will help to ease whatever it is that has brought on stress in their lives.

4. Eastern meditation focuses on man being in control. Eastern meditation practices rely on self as the agent to bring peace, tranquility and oneness with deity—the original lie: “You can become like God.” Biblical meditation reminds us God is Almighty, and when He is in control, we can be at complete peace, knowing His purposes will prevail. Eastern meditation dethrones God and puts fallen man in His place.

5. Eastern meditation is only escapism. By seeking higher levels of consciousness or altered states of consciousness, you can escape your stress and enter new realms of oneness with deity. But the fact remains that once we have returned to our usual state of consciousness, whatever brought on the

stress is still there. Biblical meditation doesn't give us an escape from reality, it gives us supernatural strength through the Holy Spirit to walk through the "fire and flood" at peace, knowing that God is in control of every situation. We don't need to escape our troubles; by faith, we walk through them, counting it all joy, "knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."

6. Eastern meditation manipulates circumstances to bring peace. By using atmosphere, objects, silence, breathing techniques and more, people are able to enter a meditative state. It's a manipulation of circumstances and atmosphere. However, the child of God can meditate on God's Word whenever, wherever, no matter the situation or circumstance, because we have direct access to the throne of God. Indeed, we are the temple of God and His Holy Spirit dwells within us. We never need to manipulate any situation to experience peace; we simply recall the precious promises of the Word of God and place our faith and trust in Him.

How to Engage in Biblical Meditation

The Lord spoke to Joshua and said this:

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go (Josh. 1:8-9).

The Hebrew word for meditate used here is *hagah*, meaning "to speak, mutter, muse, imagine or plot."

Biblical meditation is the repeated speaking of the Word of God. It also involves imagining and using the mind to plan ways we can implement the Word of God in our lives.

You do this by taking a passage of the Word and repeating it over to yourself, examining each word and imagining how it applies to your personal life.

As we begin to make biblical meditation a part of our daily Christian discipline; speaking, muttering the Word of God and imagining how we can mold our lives in concordance with it, we will see our lives transformed, and the Lord promises you “will make your way prosperous” and then you will “have success.”

Do we believe the Word in this? {eo}

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