

Christian Enlightenment Comes From The Spirit of Christ

I may not be using these words in exactly the same way that a Buddhist or a Hindu would use them; but there are parallels and differences between non-Biblical spiritualities and Christianity in this regard. There are no unanimous definitions even among the non-Christians.

Generally, enlightenment or nirvana is a place where suffering, stress, and dissatisfaction have come to an end; but notice the similarity between this and the peace that passes all understanding in Christianity or the fruit of the Spirit. All humans want to arrive at a place of contentment in their lives; and most of what we do is intended to bring us there. A major difference is that non-Biblical enlightenment is supposedly already a part of us, but it only needs to be uncovered by removing the hindrances. It is a theoretical place more than a practical place. Removing hindrances is the major challenge. Our willpower is insufficient for the task. Whether anyone has ever arrived at it in non-Biblical spiritualities is disputed even among Hindus and Buddhists. Christianity says that it is impossible without Christ because the main hindrance is the law of sin.

In Christianity, enlightenment is acquired from God. We are not born with it. There is also the element of releasing the hindrances in Christianity, but they are released towards God by using unconditional trust. Peter 5:6-7 tells us: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. " Being exalted is our Christian enlightenment. The participation of God is absent in non-Biblical spiritualities because faith in Christ is absent. Their view of God, if they have one, is not the Biblical God. In Christianity, unconditional trust in Christ

is the essential element. The Holy Spirit fills the void in our lives. Christ is our enlightener. We yield to the Spirit in order maintain our enlightenment, and we do not revert back to trying to use our own willpower.

Because of the law of sin, which is our human weakness, we are not able to arrive at this without Christ. Our sin actions do not cause the law of sin. The law of sin is the cause of our sin actions. It is the cause of the hindrances to enlightenment. If we don't recognize that there is a law of sin, we will not recognize that we need Divine help to deal with it. Non-Christian spiritualities see the effects of the law of sin, but they do not recognize its origins as a separation from the Biblical God. As a result, they are not familiar with the remedy.

This is where the Redemption comes into play. Along with eternal life, the Redemption also provides benefits for us in this present life. It restores our original peace and strength from the fall of Adam and Eve. The fruit of the Spirit is our experience of this, and is the closest that humans can experience in terms of enlightenment. It contains love, peace, and strength without the purported lifetime or lifetimes that it takes for arriving at it when using other spiritualities. The aspirations of enlightenment or nirvana can only be fulfilled in Christ.

Redemption started with the shedding of blood because "all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was prefigured by the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament. Animal sacrifices go all the way back to Adam and Eve when God gave them animal skins to wear instead of fig leaves. This required the death of an animal or animals. Abel's animal sacrifice was pleasing to God rather than Cain's "fruit of the ground." Blood sacrifice is a worldwide phenomenon. Some cultures get into human sacrifice. I find it interesting that it is such a widespread practice even among

those who seemingly had no contact with the Biblical revelation—or did they?

Christ is now alive after His crucifixion to bring us the benefits of His shed blood by His indwelling Spirit which He sends to us. Without this, we could have no enlightenment. The difference between the sacrifice of Christ and all the other sacrifices is that Christ resurrected and ascended to become a life-giving Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 15:45). All of the other previous and subsequent sacrifices, both animal and human, are all dead. The shed blood of Christ satisfied the requirement for the remission of sin; but without the resurrection and Christ's Spirit within us, we would not be able to have any of its benefits. They bring us the benefits. This is why the Old Testament animal sacrifices did not take away sin even though blood was shed. The priests died and needed to be replaced. Christ "is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

Christ's humanity is essential in the plan of salvation because His Spirit not only contains the benefits of his shed blood, but also contains His faith in the Father, without which we cannot have justification by faith. It also contains the fullness of the Godhead which is how Christ gives us access to the Father.

Jesus and Abraham were the only ones who were eligible for justification by faith. This is why Galatians 3:16 says: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." We have it when Christ's Spirit is within us because He can then share His righteousness by His faith in the Father with us. He does this in His role as the one mediator between the Father and us. Our faith in Christ opens us up to His Spirit.

Christ's divinity is also essential in the plan of

salvation; otherwise trusting in Him would not be allowed. As a result of this, we can receive His Spirit, and He can then be the channel for all of the Father's benefits that come to us. This is how He can share with us all of the benefits that He has from His faith in the Father. This includes His rest which is the peace that passes all understanding.

Peter Aiello..... The Biblical Way to Inner Peace and Strength

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