

This Popular New Trend Among Believers Has New-Age Roots

Along with the growing unbiblical trend of self-care among Christian women is a growing trend of speaking positive affirmations.

Speaking positive affirmations is a daily practice of one choosing certain phrases, thoughts and quotes to speak to themselves in an effort to boost their self-worth and defeat negativity in their life.

These affirmations are a self-help mechanism that stems from the idea that a positive mental attitude will help you achieve anything; therefore, you need to speak and think only positive things in order to achieve your goals.

To be sure, there is a biblical parallel that can be drawn here.

But isn't that how the enemy always works? He takes a biblical truth and then twists it to serve his own purposes and to lure people away from glorifying God to glorifying him ... by means of glorifying themselves.

5 Reasons Positive Affirmations Are Not Biblical

Positive affirmations, like self-care, makes us—fallen man—the center of our focus, which is humanistic: the worship of man.

This is where practices like this are so dangerous because they carry an element of truth to them, but twist them so that the object of our meditation and worship is no longer God, but a god we have formed of ourselves.

Yes; the Bible does tell us that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45).

The Bible also instructs us to think on those things that are good, true, honest, lovely and of a good report. One could say that the Bible tells us to think about positive things.

But there is a significant difference between the practice of positive affirmations and Philippians 4:8.

1. Positive affirmations make self the focus.

Just as we saw with self-care, positive affirmations are a humanistic idea, making ourselves the central focus of our daily meditation. However, in God's Word, we are told to do just the opposite.

God's Word instructs us time and again to keep our eyes fixed on Christ. We are to look to Him for our validation, strength, help and comfort.

We will not find these things in ourselves, and in just a moment we will see why.

2. Positive affirmations seek to affirm self.

Positive affirmations are all about affirming ourselves, validating our own worth and training our minds to believe that we have significance. In Scripture, however, we read that we are to die to ourselves.

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24).

Yes, it is true, we all have worth and value, we all have significance. God has created us for a special purpose, which He determined before the beginning of time.

But our worth and value are not found in us, but in Christ.

When we discover that—when we truly understand who we are in Jesus Christ—we are free from having to convince ourselves of

our own significance and are able to focus on others, affirming others, imparting that value to those around us.

"Let nothing be done out of strife or conceit, but in humility *let each esteem the other better than himself*" (Phil. 2:3, emphasis mine).

3. Positive affirmations assume power in the positivity of our own words.

James does say that the power of life and death are in the tongue.

What we speak has tremendous power because it confirms what we already feel in our heart. That is why when we get a sense that something is wrong, very often we hesitate to speak it out loud because it somehow makes the situation real.

There is great power in our words.

But behind this power are two forces at work, because words in and of themselves are not powerful. It is what inspires those words.

Inspiration comes from two sources: God and Satan.

To assume that just the act of speaking words about ourselves to transform our thinking and achieve success has power, in and of itself, is to deny the power of God. And this is a danger we face when, as God's children, we adopt this practice of positive affirmations.

2 Timothy 3:5 says that in the last days people will have a form of godliness, but deny its power. People will look godly, say things that sound godly, but their very lives deny God's power.

4. Speaking positive affirmations is a technique for self-improvement.

The central message of the gospel is that we cannot save ourselves. There is nothing we can do to help ourselves; we are hopelessly and helplessly lost.

There is nothing in us from which we can improve, and we certainly cannot improve ourselves.

Any worth and worth we have is in the fact that God created us.

Any significance we have is because of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Scripture has this to say about us: "The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They all turn aside, together they become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one" (Ps. 14:2-3).

This is repeated in Psalm 53.

Jeremiah says, "The heart is more deceitful than all things and desperately wicked; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9).

If we think that that any words of man—who lacks goodness apart from God and who is at the very center of his being deceitful and desperately wicked —can improve upon our situation, we are not only wrong, but we have exalted the power of man above the power of God.

We are putting our faith, hope and trust in the words of fallen man and trusting in our own power for success.

Do we not see how this offends God?

5. Speaking positive affirmations has its roots in New Age, Eastern religions, Buddhism and yoga.

Anytime I see a new trend like this explode in society, I like to go back and look at the origins of that trend, and here's

why. While some may argue that as long as we use an activity as worship to God, it's not important where that activity originated. For example, some say that as long as we use yoga only as exercise, or we meditate on Scripture and worship God while doing yoga, it's not bad.

But 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.

We are not to worship God in the way pagans worship their gods.

We are not to borrow their activities and turn them into worship of God. God has already prescribed in His Word how He wants us to worship Him, how we are supposed to live as dedicated children of God.

We are not to borrow activities from the world—no matter how good and nice they seem—and adopt them as our own personal practices.

Beware of Using the Bible as a Replacement for Affirmations

The temptation would be, now, to take the concept of positive affirmations and "Christianize" it: taking the nice, positive,

self-affirming and uplifting verses of the Bible and making them our main focus, while speaking them over ourselves to make ourselves feel good.

For every nice, positive and affirming verse in the Bible is a verse that reminds us that without Christ we are nothing and nobody.

Without Him, we are lost.

“[You] were at that time apart from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12).

For every nice, positive and affirming verse in the Bible is a verse that reminds us that there is nothing in us that is good, our heart is corrupt and everything we do apart from Christ only has the worth of a dung heap.

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags; and we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isa. 64:6).

Yes, we need to know who we are in Christ, but we also must understand that being in Christ comes with certain responsibilities.

Being in Christ means we live a crucified life.

It means that God’s Word is the final authority for every decision and activity.

Knowing who we are in Christ is realizing that as a child of God we must make decisions that reflect our royal lineage, we must reject those things that are in not in line with who we are as a royal son and daughter of God.

Embracing our identity in Christ means embracing more than good feeling.

It means embracing a life of sacrifice, commitment, loyalty to Scripture and submission to God's supreme authority over our life.

These verses are not meant to stroke ourselves and affirm ourselves, but to renew our mind so that our mind, our worldview and our entire life is in alignment with God's Word.

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new nature, which was created according to God in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:23-24).

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