

The Simple Way to Inner Peace and Strength

There are many non-Biblical spiritual practices and exercises which are used by Christians for trying to get close to God; but the Bible is clear on what brings us close to the Biblical God. He determines how he wants human beings to relate to Him.

In Christianity, from the very beginning, people have used spiritual practices that were developed for interacting with non-Biblical views of God. The Biblical God is a transcendent personal God who is above His creation. Other views of God are not the same. Many believe that creation is god; therefore, we are all born with god and that we only need to go inward to find Him: and there are spiritual practices associated with this view, but they do not tell anyone to go outward in trust and faith towards the Biblical God who does not require or want imagery and mantras to access Him. Many Christians are using these practices in place of simple trust in God for dealing with stress and anxiety; but, without humility towards God, people remain with their weakened human nature despite a Christian veneer that may accompany the practices.

In the Bible, God provides both inner peace and strength when we do it His way. When we pursue them, we are also pursuing the Holy Spirit because they are fruits of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23). The same Bible verses that guide us to inner peace and strength are the same ones that tell us how to open up to greater interaction with the Holy Spirit. I wasn't aware of this connection at the beginning of my search for inner peace, but I eventually found this to be true.

Inner peace was hardly mentioned in the Christianity that I grew up with. This is true in most Christian denominations even though they claim to be Bible-based. I was first exposed to the idea that it was possible to arrive at it during an

involvement with an eastern philosophy for a few years; but it did not point me to the Biblical God for opening up to His peace. It was helpful for me at that time because it told me that I could not be content in life by pursuing worldly things. We never get enough to satisfy us: we always want more. The Bible defines these as deceitful lusts. This produces ongoing frustration because we never arrive at the satisfaction that we are seeking. This explained to me why I was so dissatisfied most of the time. The philosophy also explained the importance of not worrying. I accepted these as true because of my personal experience; and I began to take my desires and worries less seriously, but it did not explain that, because of the law of sin, our human weakness makes us prone to these deception (see Romans 7:14 thru 8:2). Without God, we continue to battle from a position of weakness.

After a few years, I became curious if Christianity had any teachings on this type of thing. When I went into the Bible, I noticed that it did. I got my first concordance and looked up the word 'peace'. I found the passage in Philippians 4:6-7 that speaks of the peace that passes all understanding that we get from being anxious for nothing: and it made no exceptions. From that point on, I found other passages that alluded to the same thing. It eventually became evident to me that the Bible had much to say about inner peace and how to arrive at it. It told me to cast all of my care on God: and it made no exceptions (see 1Peter 5:5-7). I wanted to learn more because I was attracted to this. I concluded that this was the Bible's method for arriving at it: and that it was different from what the eastern philosophy taught. See James 4:4-10, Matthew 6:25-27, Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalms 37:7, 55:22, Isaiah 26:3-4, 55:7-9, and John 6:63.

I concluded that I needed to abandon the entire idea of getting to a place of contentment by getting more of anything, and not just abandon the lust for the individual thing that I happened to be pursuing for that purpose: and that I needed to

abandon all worry. I also concluded that if I didn't try the Biblical method, the rest of what I had been learning from the Bible was not going to do me any good. I did try it and was astonished at the result. Not only did I get God's peace, but also His strength. My compulsion to sin was immediately gone. From that point on, I wanted to know more of what the Bible taught.

The fact that this happened while I was walking down a street, and not in a church, told me that God is ready to do His work on us when we are ready to humble ourselves towards Him regardless of location. Also, I didn't know of any church that taught this even if I had wanted to do this in a church.

Because I had been conditioned to believe that spiritual things happen because of rituals and location, I wondered if I had gotten something that I wasn't supposed to get, and that I had tricked God; instead, He tricked me and strung me along until I did it His way. Its simplicity also surprised me. Because I had never heard of this type of thing before, I felt as though I had rediscovered something from the ancient past that had been neglected by Christianity for a very long time. It still worked after 2000 years.

"Thus saith the LORD, Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk in it, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16).

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