

A Response to Those Who Get Upset About This Study on "Meditation"

Not everybody accepts what the Bible says about "meditation." Here is a short e-mail (slightly paraphrased) that I received a few years ago:

There are some other views about meditation that you are not aware of. Such as: meditation is not "turning off" the mind but quieting the mind in order to find the peace already there. Please check these out before you condemn them all (publicly on the web I might add) in your article titled, "What is "meditation" all about? (Definition)"

Actually I AM aware of other definitions, but my purpose is to present the *Bible's* concept. If you want to go after some other definition, I can't stop you!

My response to such a complaint would probably include the following:

- 1) Since I am a follower of Jesus, I am committed to accepting the *Bible's* concept of "meditation." Any other "definition" would be, by nature, a counterfeit.
- 2) I am not opposed to relaxation - which might be related to the idea of "quieting the mind," mentioned above. But this is not what the Bible means, when it uses the term "meditate." On the other hand, even the word "relaxation" might have different meanings for the follower of Jesus and for the proponents of the world's "meditation."

In my interaction with proponents of the world's "meditation," it seems that their use of the phrase "quieting the mind" tends to focus on a *passive* "non-activity" of the mind (or a diminishing of activity). Instead of this, the Bible focuses on *active* choices of the mind, such as "trusting God." Psalm 131 is an excellent example in which "quietness" and an active "trust" in God are inseparably linked together. It's not a matter of diminishing the thoughts of the mind, but replacing them with other thoughts.

Psalm 131

LORD, my heart is not filled with proud ambitions;
my eyes are not lifted up in arrogance:
I do not preoccupy myself with heroic exploits
and mighty accomplishments.

But I have calmed and quieted my restless soul,
content like a child resting in its mother's arms.
My soul is like a contented, resting child.

O Israel, be content to put your hope in the LORD,
both now and forevermore.

- 3) The idea of finding "the peace already there," mentioned in the above e-mail, may suggest that the author has no clue as to what the Bible's concept of peace is all about. (At least most people who use that phrase have no clue about what the Bible says, and they pursue methods that can bring only a superficial "false-peace," at best.) It is not my purpose here, to present a study on the word "peace." But I encourage you to check out the Bible and see for yourself!

If you are satisfied with a counterfeit, then perhaps the world's "peace" has something for you. But if you want the peace that *Jesus* offers, take note that it *cannot* be obtained by those who are not his followers.

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." (John 14:27)

- 4) Counterfeits often have short-term results that seem "positive." They may even contain "half-truths" that are actually *true!* (The problem is the omission of the *other* half of the truth, and the error that creeps in because of that.) I do not deny that many people will claim to see "positive benefits" in the world's concept of "meditation" - whether it be the "religious" form or the "secularized" form. But being counterfeits of the genuine, they give you less than what the genuine gives (in addition to being diluted with error). They also distract you from the genuine, so that you live your life with what is fake, never able to grasp what is real.

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