

The Renewed Mind



At the age of twelve, Hindu children begin the practice of Yoga or union with God. They fast and pray, and look within to find God. They believe that the kingdom of God is within them. Breathing exercises are used; life or prana is breathed in through one nostril and evil things are breathed out of the other nostril. These techniques keep the mind from wandering during periods of prayer. Hindus believe that the mind is of the flesh, and consequently it is contrary to God. Thus they work continually to renew the mind toward Godly things. Paul refers to this; he says,

Romans 12:2

Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

From the age of twelve, then, Hindu children continue with this renewing of the mind throughout their adult lives. I know that Christians could benefit from these teachings; in fact there are several verses in Paul's letters which instruct Christians to gain control of their minds; but these are largely overlooked by the Western world, because they are not understood.

The Hindus believe, and Scripture agrees, that the things of the flesh are contrary to things of the Spirit. The mind and all the rest of the senses are of the flesh. The mind is likely to be full of dread and fear; the Spirit is full of love, peace, joy, longsuffering, and so forth. Therefore Yoga practice trains the mind to be in union with the Spirit, and to bring it into subjection to the Spirit. The mind tells you "it can't be done"; the Spirit says that with God all things are possible.

The mind says you surely won't get what you need; the Spirit says your Father knoweth what things you have need of and they will be supplied out of His riches in glory.

In this way, the negative and depressing thoughts of the mind are commanded out, and are replaced with the positive promises of God's Word. The mind is an instrument in our hands. We must command it. Words are power; the words you say that go out into the air are powerful and they come back to you hundred-fold. This is why we should guard our tongues, for we are convicted by every idle word. If you bless them that curse you, you receive blessings in return.

Paul speaks of the struggle between flesh and spirit as "the war in my body, wretched man that I am." And in Chapter 8 of Romans, Paul says,

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The reason that Christians need to understand this teaching of Paul's, is that so many Christians today "walk in the flesh"; they have experienced salvation, but they do not renew their minds. They do not "put on the mind of Christ" (Philippians 2:5).

Remember that when Jesus stilled the storms of the sea, he stretched forth his hand and said, "Peace, be still." The Hindus believe that if you can still the storms of your mind, that it is a greater miracle than stilling the sea. They say that the storms of the mind are greater than storms of the sea: we must say to our minds, "Peace, be still!"

Yogis who chance to read the Christian Bible find great significance in the verse from the Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 6:22

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

The "single eye" expresses the Yogi concept of concentration on God; they believe that there is a third eye in the center of the forehead which is a spiritual eye and this is used to concentrate and meditate upon God. "thy whole body shall be full of light", the Yogi understands it to mean Spirit. The whole body becomes spirit, they say.

Although Hindus do worship God as Spirit, theirs is a religion of works as is Judaism and Buddhism. At the time of Christ's birth, these three powerful religions were available to the worshipper. Yet Jesus did not exhort the people to works; no, he had an entirely new and unique Truth for the world. He did not say, "I have come that you might have a new or better religion." He said, rather:

John 10:10

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.

After we have received salvation and thus eternal life by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, then we can enter into this more abundant life through the renewing of the mind. God bless you.

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