

ABIDING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

The Art and Science of Meditation

by

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"All man's miseries derive from not being able to sit quietly in a room alone." Blaise Pascal

"...Seek ye first the kingdom of God...for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

Matthew 6:33 & Luke 17:21

"The Self (*true nature of God and man*) cannot be known by anyone, who desists not from unrighteous ways, controls not his senses, stills not his mind, and practices not meditation." Katha Upanishad 2:24

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psalm 17:15

1. Your interest in Meditation?

- Issues of stress management and need for deep relaxation
- Issues of spiritual boredom, a burdensome mortal existence, difficulty realizing a Christlike nature, or lack of deep spiritual fulfillment.

2. My Story

- Difficulty realizing a Christlike Nature
- Period of chronic pain and stress
- Meditation: From pain/stress management to Spiritual Awakening and Inner Transformation
- Unity of The Yoga Tradition and the Mystery teachings of Jesus (The Yoga of Christ article)

3. Significance of The Perennial Philosophy

- There is an infinite, changeless reality beneath the world of change
- This same reality lies at the core and is the essence of every human being
- The purpose of this life is to discover this reality and to integrate it into one's daily life
 - Awakening to the true nature, character, presence, and being of God and oneself

4. Two Spiritual Paths

- Deficiency vs Wholeness
- Divine Potential vs Divine Nature
- Salvation from without vs Awakening from within

5. The major result of "The Fall" was a transfer of identity from one's eternal, spiritual nature to a temporal, "natural man" orientation (or ego/mind in modern spiritual lingo).

- The "natural man" or "ego" experiences self as a complex of mortal body, physical sensations and limited perceptions, thoughts, emotions, needs, memories and desires, life circumstances and events, possessions, relationships, a range of pleasurable and painful experiences, etc, all woven together by "the story of me". The #1 characteristic of the "natural man" is fear since most of what it is identified with is temporary. Its #1 objective is control as it tries to maximize security and pleasure by using people, stuff, position, power, image, and even religion. This "natural man" (along with the world of form, which includes thoughts and emotions) is The Veil of Forgetfulness. Problem = limited vision, conditioned perception and behavior.
- Our true, spiritual nature, which is rarely experienced, is pure, whole/holy, unbounded, and eternal. It reflects all of the qualities and characteristics of the Kingdom of God. Its #1 characteristic is love and its #1 objective is Oneness or the Awakened State.
- 2 Cor 4:16-18 and the "inner path".

6. The primary purpose of The Gospel is to assist us with a transfer of identity from the “natural man” back to our spiritual essence. As and when this occurs we become redeemed, saved, awakened--reborn in Christ and One with God. The core of the Gospel properly understood and practiced:

- is NOT primarily for one to become a “good” or “moral” person; to be “good enough” or to “qualify”
- is NOT to perfect the “natural man”, which cannot be perfected, but to crucify it (Gal 5:24)
- IS, in its early stages, to tame or limit the destructive effects of the “natural man” through a mature, responsible, moral lifestyle but it should then lead us into a sanctification process that results in spiritual transformation or rebirth
- Problem of the preparatory stages (external practices) being seen as The Purpose of the Gospel
- Insight from John 3:1-8
- “Lose” one’s “life” (NM/Ego) to “find” IT (Divine Nature). (In all four Gospels)

7. Did Jesus meditate?

- “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” (Mark 1:35)
- “And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” (Luke 6:12)
- Matthew 6:5,7,6
 - Not for Ego purposes (Usual focus of our prayers?)
 - Not with many words
 - Go into your closet (inner room within); Shut the door (to usual use of senses and mind); Pray (“wait” and “watch” = Present Moment Awareness and Alert) to your Father who is in “secret”, “the secret place”, “in hiding”, “in the hidden place” (beyond physical senses and thoughts).

8. The Still Mind and The Pure Heart

- “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10) What needs to be stilled? Mind (D&C 88:67,68)
- “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God” (Matt 5:8) What is a pure heart?
- Meditation as the deepest form of Prayer.