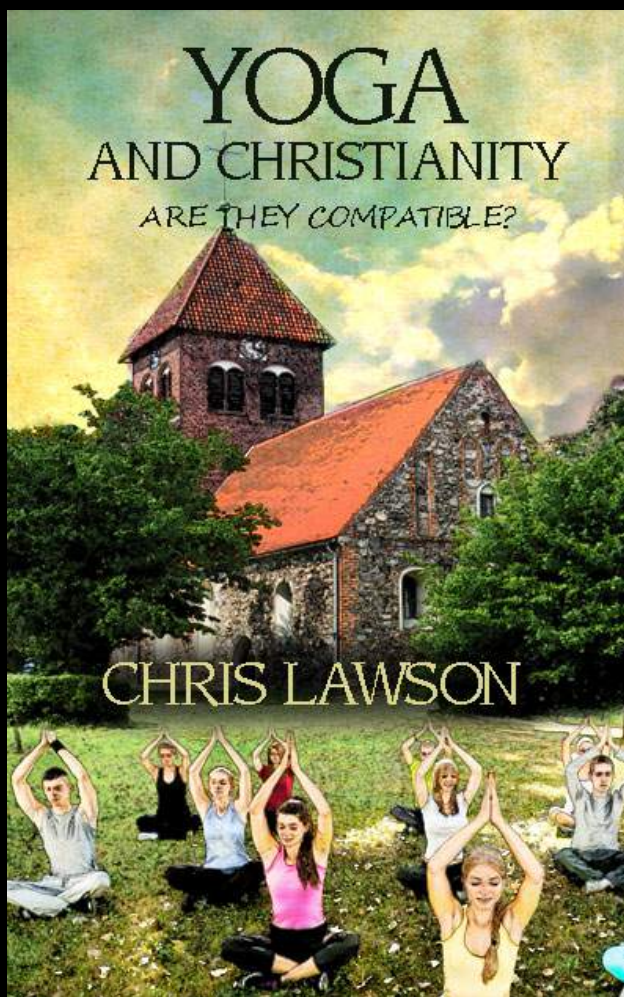


## YOGA AND CHRISTIANITY ARE THEY COMPATIBLE?

*By Chris Lawson*



- 20.4 million Americans practice Yoga, compared to 15.8 million from the previous 2008 study.
- Practitioners spend \$10.3 billion a year on Yoga classes and products. The previous estimate from the 2008 study was \$5.7 billion.
- Of current non-practitioners, 44.4 percent of Americans call themselves “aspirational yogis”—people who are interested in trying Yoga. (“Yoga in America Study 2012”, *Yoga Journal*)

**Dear friends of SRN,**

It is not just myself and a few others who have been warning about the dangers of mixing Yoga with Christianity, even the non-Christian world sees the folly of doing such. Consider the following quote that a fellow research ministry received *directly* from the Classical Yoga Hindu Academy:

"Is Yoga a religion that denies Jesus Christ? Yes. Just as Christianity denies the Hindu MahaDevas such as Siva, Vishnu, Durga and Krishna, to name a few, Hinduism and its many Yogas have nothing to do with God and Jesus (though we do respect that others believe in this way). As Hindus who live the Yogic lifestyle, we appreciate when others understand that all of Yoga is all about the Hindu religion. Modern so-called 'yoga' is dishonest to Hindus and to all non-Hindus such as the Christians." —*Danda, Dharma Yoga Ashram (Classical Yoga Hindu Academy)*

Consider also what non-Christian Yogi Baba Prem stated in his article "There is no Christian Yoga?":

"It was quite astonishing to see on the flyer 'Christian Yoga! This Thursday night....' I could feel the wheels spinning in my brain. 'Christian Yoga,' I thought. Now while Christians can practice yoga, I am not aware of any Christian teachings about yoga. Yoga is not a Judeo/Christian word! It is not a part of the Roman Catholic teachings and certainly not a part of protestant teachings. It is not found within the King James Version of the bible. It is a Hindu word, or more correctly a Sanskrit word from the Vedic civilization. So how did we get 'Christian Yoga'? 'From this I could conclude that 'Christian Yoga' could only indicate one of two possibilities:" —*Yogi Baba Prem, Vedavisharada, CYI, C.ay, C.va, South Asia Mail*

For the faithful believer in Jesus Christ, the Word of God is very clear what the Christian theological and practical position should be on this subject. Unfortunately, fewer and fewer people these days seem to care what God has to say.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;** and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (Emphasis added. 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

- *Chris Lawson*

**ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF SRN*****Proclaiming the Gospel and Encouraging Biblical Discernment!***

*Spiritual Research Network (SRN) researches, informs and warns about the dangers of cults, spiritual abuse and mysticism (occult) based spirituality.*

Spiritual Research Network (SRN) is an independent Christian outreach that is committed first and foremost to the Lord Jesus Christ and the integrity of God's Word - *The Holy Bible*.

From its inception as a tiny missions outreach in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2004, the goal of SRN has been to provide a platform for outreach so that others may come to a deeper understanding of the love, grace and truth as it is found in the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ, as taught in Scripture.

**MISSION**

The mission of SRN is to encourage biblical discernment amongst those who consider themselves to be biblical Christians and to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to nonbelievers. For these reasons we give great emphasis to the person, work and words of Jesus Christ in all of our activities.

**PURPOSE**

SRN exists in order to: **Glorify**, honor and serve the Lord Jesus Christ by living and proclaiming the biblical Gospel message without compromise; **Provide** evangelistic training and resources with an emphasis on the Bible as the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant and infallible in the original manuscripts, and the supreme and final authority in matters of faith and life; **Expose** teachings that oppose, undermine and distort the biblical Gospel of God's grace as found in Scripture; **Contend** earnestly for the faith against those who compromise, suppress or reject doctrinal truth; and **Encourage** and support former members of other belief systems who have escaped spiritual deception and abuse.

**WEBSITE and NEWSLETTER**

The SRN *Website* and *Newsletter* serve as an extension of SRN's local ministry. The General Editor is Chris Lawson.

**BELIEFS**

SRN holds to the orthodox teachings of the historic Christian faith. SRN holds the following as *primary essentials* for Christian belief. "*The Five Basic Doctrines*: 1) The Trinity: God is one "What" and three "Who's" with each "Who" possessing all the attributes of Deity and personality; 2) The Person of Jesus Christ: Jesus is 100% God and 100% man for all eternity; 3) The Second Coming: Jesus Christ is coming bodily to earth to rule and judge; 4) Salvation: It is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone; 5) The Scripture: It is entirely inerrant and sufficient for all Christian life." SRN *Statement of Faith* can be read online.

**PROVISION**

SRN is supported through the prayers and financial support of donors who share our concern for God's people and the lost. Accountability and transparency is our policy. **To help support the ministry of SRN please see our current donation details online.**

## **SPECIAL ISSUE:**

**YOGA AND CHRISTIANITY - Are They Compatible? (NEW PRINT BOOKLET TRACT) - By Chris Lawson**

# YOGA AND CHRISTIANITY - Are They Compatible?

By Chris Lawson

## **Western Culture Embraces Yoga**

It is no secret that Yoga is taking Western civilization by storm. In just a little over a hundred years, a mystical revolution has occurred that millions of Westerners have wholeheartedly embraced. Amazingly, the Western Judeo-Christian view is in the process of a paradigm shift toward the same perspective as yogic India.

To illustrate the magnitude of the Yoga explosion, consider *Yoga Journal's* "Yoga in America Study 2012." This study reveals some incredible statistics:

- 20.4 million Americans practice Yoga, compared to 15.8 million from the previous 2008 study.
- Practitioners spend \$10.3 billion a year on Yoga classes and products. The previous estimate from the 2008 study was \$5.7 billion.
- Of current non-practitioners, 44.4 percent of Americans call themselves "aspirational yogis"—people who are interested in trying Yoga.<sup>1</sup>

Yoga (or Yogic spirituality) is influencing Christians and non-Christians alike. It only takes 0.27 seconds to come up with over 411,000,000 results for Yoga on Google's search engine. When searching Amazon.com's "All" category for Yoga, one quickly comes up with a staggering 143,081 results. That's just

within Amazon.Com. If one searches for book titles only on Amazon.com, the search yields 26,316. Certainly, the influence of Yoga can be found almost everywhere. In Time Magazine's book, *Alternative Medicine: Your Guide to Stress Relief, Healing, Nutrition, and More*, it states:

Hard to believe now, but yoga was once considered heretical, and even dangerous. As recently as a century ago, yogis in America were viewed with suspicion; some were actually thrown in jail. Today, though, most gyms offer it, many public schools teach it, and a growing number of doctors prescribe it . . . It may have taken 5,000 years, but yoga has arrived.<sup>2</sup>

## **Just What is Yoga?**

No doubt, many, probably most, of the millions of Westerners who practice postural Yoga have never read a simple definition of what Yoga really is. Below, I have presented a small selection of definitions of Yoga. While there are countless descriptions on the Internet and in libraries, the definitions I have chosen are an accurate overall representation of the meaning of Yoga.

According to *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary*, Yoga is essentially: "a practice involving intense and complete concentration upon something, especially deity, in order to establish identity of consciousness with the object of

concentration; it is a mystic and ascetic practice, usually involving the discipline of prescribed postures, controlled breathing, etc.”<sup>3</sup>

The *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary* adds: “a Hindu theistic philosophy teaching the suppression of all activity of body, mind, and will in order that the self may realize its distinction from them and attain liberation.”<sup>4</sup>

Cyndi Lee, expert yogi and writer for *Yoga Journal*, defines Yoga as such:

The word yoga, from the Sanskrit\* word yuj means to yoke or bind and is often interpreted as “union” . . . The Indian sage Patanjali is believed to have collated the practice of yoga into the *Yoga Sutra* an estimated 2,000 years ago.

The *Sutra* is a collection of 195 statements that serves as a philosophical guidebook for most of the yoga that is practiced today. It also outlines eight limbs of yoga: the yamas (restraints), niyamas (observances), asana (postures), pranayama (breathing), pratyahara (withdrawal of senses), dharana (concentration), dhyani (meditation), and samadhi (absorption).<sup>5</sup>

Goutam Paul, author of *Bhagavad Gita: The Ultimate Science of Yoga* states:

When we talk about linking or connection, an obvious question arises: to connect what with what? The very word “connection” implies that there must be two different entities separated from one another, and they need to be connected. The ancient Vedic\* text *Bhagavad Gita* explains that these entities are the individual consciousness and the universal Supreme consciousness. Some may call this universal consciousness an all-pervading energy, whereas most theists consider this Supreme consciousness to be God. . . . The purpose of Yoga is to connect the individual energy with the universal energy, or put another way, to connect the individual being to its source—the Supreme Being.<sup>6</sup>

One large online archive of New Age, occult, and mysticism-oriented literature states:

The ancient Yogis recognised long ago that in order to accomplish the highest stage of yoga, which is the realisation of the self, or God consciousness, a healthy physical body is essential. For when we are sick, our attention is seldom free enough to



Hinduism’s Lord Siva,  
the first and original  
*hatha yoga* teacher

contemplate the larger reality, or to muster the energy for practice. . .

The roots of Yoga can be traced back roughly 5,000 years to the Indus Valley civilization. . . . According to the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, the ultimate aim of Yoga is to reach “Kaivalya” (freedom). This is the experience of one’s innermost being or “soul” (the Purusa). When this level of awareness is achieved, one becomes free of the chains of cause and effect (Karma) which bound us to continual reincarnation.<sup>7</sup>

The *Index of Cults and New Religions* lists the different types of Yoga:

*Karma Yoga* (spiritual union through correct conduct)

*Bhakti Yoga* (spiritual union through devotion to a Guru)

*Juana Yoga* (spiritual union through hidden knowledge)

*Raja Yoga* (spiritual union through mental control)

*Hatha Yoga* (spiritual union through body control/ meditation)

*Kundalini Yoga* (spiritual union through focusing inner energy)

*Tantra Yoga* (spiritual union through sexual practices)<sup>8</sup>

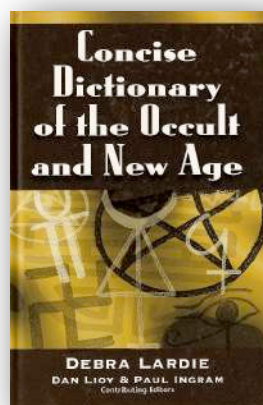
Swami Nirmalananda Giri of the Atma Jvoti Ashram, answering the question to “What is Yoga?” states:

What do we join through yoga? Two eternal beings: God, the Infinite Being, and the individual spirit that is finite being. In essence they are one, and according to yogic philosophy all spirits originally dwelt in consciousness of that oneness.<sup>9</sup>

The *Concise Dictionary of the Occult and New Age* describes how Yoga is done:

Typical exercises, such as those found in hatha yoga, are practiced under the tutelage of a guru or yogi, a personal religious guide and spiritual teacher. Gurus teach students to combine a variety of breathing techniques with asanas, or relaxation postures. In each of the postures, students must first enter the position, then maintain it for a certain length of time, and finally leave it.<sup>10</sup>

This dictionary further states that people in the West have mistaken Yoga to be “mere breathing and relaxation exercises,” when in reality “[t]he



practice of yoga serves as a gateway to Eastern mysticism and occult thinking.”<sup>11</sup> It adds:

Certain postures, such as the lotus position, are taken to activate the psychic energy centers [the chakras]. And specific breathing exercises are practiced to infuse the soul with cosmic energy floating in the air. A guru might have students gaze at a single object, such as a candle, to develop and focus concentration. The guru might have them chant a mantra to clear their minds and become one with the object in front of them. The goal is to achieve increasingly higher meditative states until reaching oneness with the cosmic consciousness.<sup>12</sup>

### Understanding the Meaning of “Occult”

The word “occult” comes from the Latin *occultus* or “hidden,” and those who employ the term generally do so in an attempt to describe secret and mysterious supernatural powers or magical (magick) religious rituals.

Throughout history, there have been those who attempted to gain supernatural power or knowledge through occult means. Occultism also can generally refer to witchcraft, Satanism, neo-paganism, or any of the various forms of psychic discernment such as astrology, séances, palm reading, and a myriad of other spiritual methodologies for contact with the spirit world. The term occult is often interchangeable with the term metaphysics—these terms share the belief that there is a universal energy (e.g., *Chi*, *Prana*, *Ki*, etc.) that exists in all things. By engaging in the occult (i.e., metaphysical arts), this energy is awakened. Yoga in all its forms is simply one spiritual genre among many designed to induce practitioners into altered states, thereby gaining access into the world of occult spirituality.

### Kundalini—the Energy Behind Yoga

Internationally recognized occult authority, Hans-Ulrich Rieker (author of *The Yoga of Light: Hatha Yoga Pradipika*) describes the vital role kundalini plays in Yoga when he states, “Kundalini [is] the mainstay of all yoga practices.”<sup>13</sup> With this in mind, a brief look at “kundalini energy” (the root of Yoga) is in order.

Born as Chinmoy Kumar Ghose (1931-2007), Sri Chinmoy was an Indian spiritual “master,” spirit medium, occultist, and interfaith guru. Teaching Yoga in the West from the time he moved to New York City in 1964, Chinmoy spent 43 years in the West producing “prayers and meditations, literary, musical and artistic works.” Giving spiritual meditations twice a week at the United Nations building (since 1970),<sup>14</sup>

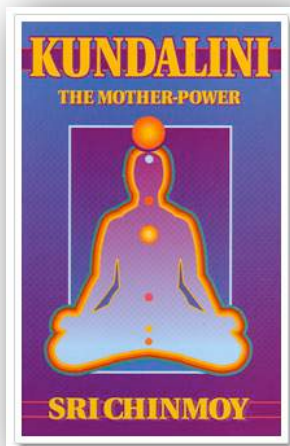
Chinmoy’s occult philosophy for life was, “When the power of love Replaces the love of power Man will have a new name: God.”<sup>15</sup> Man becomes “God”? According to Chinmoy, yes!

Like many other occultists who promote yogic spirituality intertwined with “love,” Chinmoy masterfully crafted his occultism under the guise of “Concentration, Meditation, Will-Power and Love.” These themes are expanded upon in Chinmoy’s occult manifesto, *Kundalini: The Mother Power* where Chinmoy explains Yoga’s occult foundation, goals, and the purpose of manifesting the kundalini *serpent power*.



Chinmoy likened “kundalini arousal” (varying states of demonic possession) to a “game” that is to be “played” between Shakti “The Mother Power” (a Hindu goddess) and the adept who seeks to manifest kundalini. The “power” and “force” that Chinmoy encourages people to “play with” is, in actuality, in many varying religious contexts, demonic spirits (fallen angels) that masquerade as “The Mother Supreme,” “kundalini,” “Chi,” “prana,” etc. Chinmoy wrote:

When the kundalini is awake, man is fully aware of the inner world. He knows that the outer world cannot satisfy his inner needs. He has brought to the fore the capacity of the inner world, which he has come to realise is far superior to the capacity of the outer world. He has brought to the fore the hidden powers, the occult powers, within himself. Either he uses these powers properly or he misuses them. When he divinely uses the powers of kundalini, he becomes the real pride of the Mother Supreme. When he misuses them, he becomes the worst enemy of man’s embodied consciousness and of his own personal evolution.<sup>16</sup>



Here in the West there are many who feel that the powers of kundalini yoga are nothing but rank superstition. I wish to say that those who cherish this idea are totally mistaken. Even the genuine spiritual Masters have examined kundalini yoga and found in their own experiences the undeniable authenticity of its hidden occult powers.<sup>17</sup>

The kundalini power is the dynamic power in us. When the dynamic power and the spiritual knowledge go hand in hand, the perfect harmony of the Universal Consciousness dawns and the conscious evolution of the human soul reaches the transcendental Self [godhood].<sup>18</sup>

*Continued on page 7*

# OPPORTUNITY...

## YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

enable SRN's **research** and **outreach** ministry



**RUNNING THE RACE:** "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2) Photo: San Simeon, California

## How you can help!

SRN is supported by the prayers and donations of those who share our concern for the lost and who would like to see individuals and families remain steadfast in the Christian faith.

SRN is currently operating on an extremely limited budget. Our monthly operating costs include rent, web hosting fees, office supplies, printing and postage costs, and more.

SRN is in need of funding for a travel video projector, full-time missionary staff support, short term mission trips, and CD audio production materials. Our main need at this time is for staff support so that we can accomplish projects and move ahead with necessary ministry opportunities.

### **NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP and ONLINE DONATIONS**

Spiritual Research Network is an independent ministry outreach of Chris Lawson.

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(This page updated June 2014)

### Kundalini Awakening

If Kundalini is “the mainstay of all Yoga practices,” as Rieker and other Yoga authorities maintain, the Yoga practitioner must understand clearly what the “kundalini” power is, how “it” operates, and what its effects are.<sup>19</sup>

Kundalini is a term which in Sanskrit means “coiled.” This “yogic life force” supposedly moves through the chakras (energy centers that are “activated one by one through the breath”<sup>20</sup> in the human body in order to bring one into a state of occult enlightenment. According to occult philosophy, Kundalini is a non-physical field of energy that yogis say not only surrounds the physical body but can infuse the body.

Lee Sannella, M.D., a noted Psychiatrist, Ophthalmologist, and cofounder of the Kundalini Clinic in San Francisco, explains in his book *The Kundalini Experience: Psychosis or Transcendence*:

According to this [tantric] Indian tradition, the kundalini is a type of energy—a “power” or “force” (*shakti*)—that is held to rest in a dormant, or potential, state in the human body. Its location is generally specified as being at the base of the spine. When this energy is galvanized, “awakened,” [which is done during Yoga], it rushes upward along the central axis of the human body, or along the spinal, to the crown of the head. Occasionally, it is thought to go even beyond the head. Upon arriving there, the kundalini is said to give rise to the mystical state of consciousness, which is indescribably blissful and in which all awareness of duality [separation] ceases.<sup>21</sup>

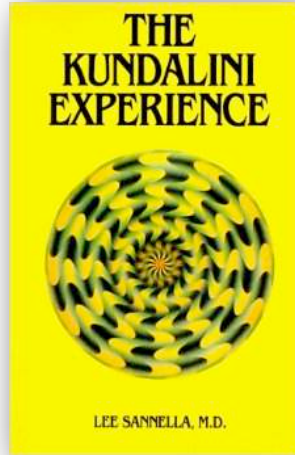
For those who have doubts that all Yoga has the capacity to arouse kundalini energy, perhaps one ought to think again. After all, the Yoga postures themselves were designed specifically to receive this serpent power.

### Yoga’s Dangers of Psycho-spiritual and Psycho-physical “Emergencies”

Volumes of material could be quoted from regarding the dangers of Yoga, meditation, and other psycho-spiritual and physio-spiritual practices. Modern practitioners—and even medical doctors—are now testifying to the fact that physical dangers associated with practicing Yoga are a reality. In fact, people who have done Yoga for purely “physical exercise” have been spiritually affected to the point of being systematically dismantled by hostile “forces,” over which they have no power. Eastern gurus call this type of Yoga effect “enlightenment,” yet it is anything but that!



In India today, countless millions of Yoga practitioners are influenced by the spirit world, achieving manifold “possession” states and “manifesting” the kundalini-shakti power (also called “serpent power”). It is the same in the West, only it falls under different names and in a Western context. One should note well that it was not until the 19th and early 20th centuries that Yoga was touted as a physio-postural “exercise” in Britain and the USA.<sup>22</sup>



The following is a mere sampling of what can occur when the kundalini-shakti “force” is “aroused,” “galvanized,” “awakened,” “summoned,” etc. These “spiritual emergencies” can even occur during Hatha Yoga sessions at the local fitness center. Depending on the teacher (yogi/yogini) one has, you never quite know what you will get.

In Lee Sannella’s book *The Kundalini Experience: Psychosis or Transcendence*, Sannella tells how the “Physio-Kundalini” experience is “a dramatic occurrence . . . culminating [in a] state of ecstatic unification.”<sup>23</sup> He adds:

[T]he kundalini causes the central nervous system to throw off stress . . . usually associated with the experience of pain . . . It appears to act of its own volition, spreading through the entire psychophysiological system to affect its transformation.<sup>24</sup>

[T]he kundalini produces the most striking sensations . . . the “heat” generated by “friction” of the kundalini . . . causes turbulence, which may be experienced as painful sensations . . . spontaneous bodily movements, shifting somatic sensations.<sup>25</sup>

Amongst other kundalini symptoms, “spiritual emergency” scenarios<sup>26</sup> and numerous case studies of destructive kundalini manifestations, Sannella mentions Swami Narayananda, author of “the first detailed book on the kundalini experience.”<sup>27</sup> Sannella notes that Narayananda’s book:

. . . distinguished between a partial and a full arousal of the kundalini energy.

Whereas partial arousal can lead to all kinds of physical and mental complications, only the kundalini’s complete ascent to the center at the crown of the head will awaken the true impulse to God-realization, or liberation, and bring about the desired revolution in consciousness. Only then can the body-mind be transcended in the unalloyed bliss of enlightenment.<sup>28</sup>

# SRIN



Moscow Circus, Edinburgh, Scotland.

BIBLICAL DISCERNMENT  
- *THE MISSING JEWEL OF THE 21ST CENTURY CHURCH!*

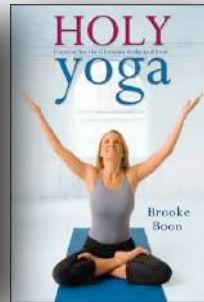
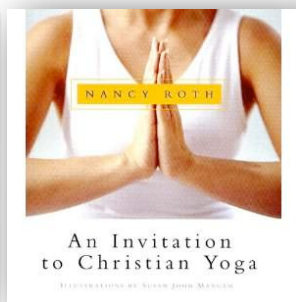
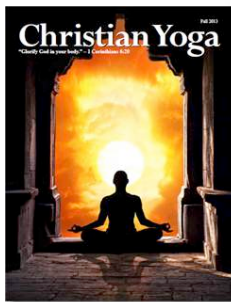
# JULY



Narayanananda catalogued a listing of sensations and experiences that occur as kundalini symptoms. Sannella summarizes some of these:

- \* There is strong burning, first along the back and then over the whole body.
- \* The kundalini's entrance into the central spinal canal, called sushuma, is attendant with pain.
- \* When the kundalini reaches the heart, one may experience palpitations.
- \* One feels a creeping sensation from the toes, and sometimes the whole body starts to shake. The rising sensation may feel like an ant crawling slowly up the body toward the head, or like a snake wiggling along, or a bird hopping from place to place, or like a fish darting through calm water, or like a monkey leaping to a far branch.<sup>29</sup>

Sannella arranges the “physio-kundalini complex” into four basic categories, which the following somewhat encapsulates and which Sannella (and others) consider to be “therapeutic.” Of the psycho-spiritual/physio-spiritual process Sannella contends, “[s]everal of my kundalini cases are especially interesting because they serve as support for my contention that the kundalini process can be looked upon as being inherently therapeutic.”<sup>30</sup>



Therapeutic? I find that absurd reasoning! Surprisingly, Sannella admits to the dangers:

I must, however, sound a word of caution here. I firmly believe that methods designed specifically to hasten kundalini arousal, such as breath control exercises known as pranayama, are hazardous, unless practiced directly under the guidance of a competent spiritual teacher, or guru, who should have gone through the whole kundalini process himself or herself.<sup>31</sup>

He says the Yoga breathing techniques “may prematurely unleash titanic inner forces,” and the practitioner will have no way to control these forces. He warns, “The kundalini can be forced, but only to one’s own detriment.”<sup>32</sup> Basically, one must go through varying stages of what the Bible would consider demonic possession!

### Symptoms of Kundalini Awakening

There is a very long list of symptoms that can

occur during a kundalini awakening. While proponents will tell you that there are many benefits, they readily admit, as I have shown, that there are many terrible consequences. Here are just a few of them:

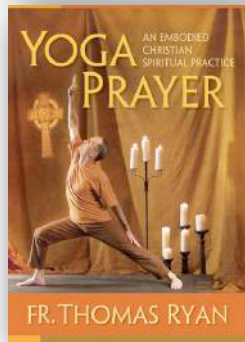
- Tremors \* Shivering \* Shaking \* Cramps \* Spasms \* Energy rushes \* Muscle twitches \* Strong electricity circulating the body \* Tingling \* Intense heat or cold \* Involuntary bodily movements \* Jerking \* Periods of extreme hyperactivity \* Periods of fatigue \* Intensified or diminished sexual desires \* Headaches \* Pressures within the skull \* Racing heartbeat \* Emotional outbursts \* Rapid mood shifts \* Feeling of grief, fear, rage, depression \* Spontaneous and uncontrollable laughing and weeping \* Mental confusion \* Convulsions \* Altered states of consciousness <sup>33</sup>

I don’t recall Jesus or the disciples ever likening the fruit of the Spirit or the working of the Holy Spirit with any of these symptoms!

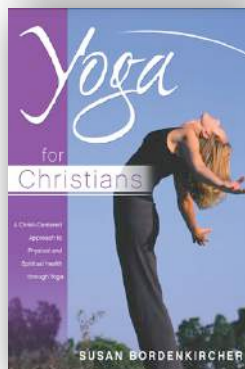
### What About “Christian” Yoga?

In an eye-opening article titled “Yoga Renamed is Still Hindu: I challenge Attempts to Snatch Yoga From its Roots,” Professor Subhas R. Tiwari of the Hindu University of America made some very interesting points in response to inquiries from several journalists around the country. As a graduate

with a Master’s degree in Yoga philosophy from the famed Bihar Yoga Bharati University, Professor Tiwari’s response was featured in an article in *Hinduism Today*. Professor Tiwari enlightened undiscerning American’s with the following:



In the past few months I have received several calls from journalists around the country seeking my views on the question of whether the newly minted “Christian Yoga” is really yoga.



My response is, “The simple, immutable fact is that yoga originated from the Vedic or Hindu culture. Its techniques were not adopted by Hinduism, but originated from it.” . . . The effort to separate yoga from Hinduism must be challenged because it runs counter to the fundamental principles upon which yoga itself is premised. . . . Efforts to separate yoga from its spiritual center reveal ignorance of the goal of yoga. . . .

[Yoga] was intended by the Vedic seers as an instrument which can lead one to apprehend the Absolute, Ultimate Reality, called the Brahman Reality, or God. If this attempt to co-opt yoga into their own tradition continues, in several decades of incessantly spinning the untruth as truth through re-labelings such as “Christian yoga,” who will know that yoga is—or was—part of Hindu culture?<sup>34</sup>

Some may ask, “Well, can’t I just do the Yoga exercises and forego the religious or spiritual aspects?” One researcher has this to say:

There is absolutely no problem in stretching exercises in and of themselves. . . . No one can deny that stretching helps the blood flow, that breathing in oxygen helps our overall health. . . . There are numerous exercise programs that incorporate stretching that in no way relates to yoga (and its perspective). . . . Religious syncretism is probably the most dangerous thing we can involve ourselves in because we can rationalize its purpose. . . . Essentially one cannot practice a portion of Hinduism and continue to walk with the true Christ who is not a Hindu Guru.<sup>35</sup>

A former occultist who is now a Christian explains:

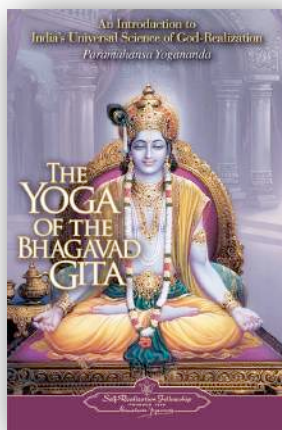
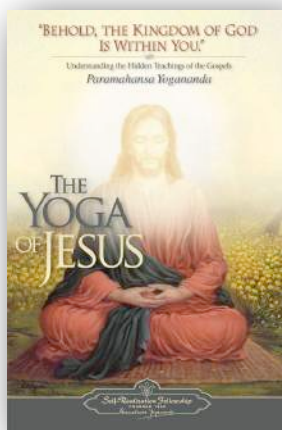
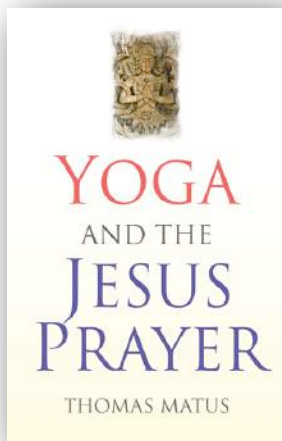
You cannot separate the exercises from the philosophy. . . . The movements themselves become a form of meditation. The continued practice of the exercises will, whether you . . . intend it or not, eventually influence you toward an Eastern/mystical perspective. That is what it is meant to do! . . . There is, by definition, no such thing as “neutral” Yoga<sup>36</sup>

### The Conflict Between Yoga, “Christian” Yoga, and the Gospel

Is Yoga a religion that denies Jesus Christ? Yes. Just as Christianity denies the Hindu MahaDevas such as Siva, Vishnu, Durga and Krishna, to name a few, Hinduism and its many Yogas have nothing to do with God and Jesus . . . all of Yoga is all about the Hindu religion. Modern so-called “yoga” is dishonest to Hindus and to all non-Hindus such as the Christians.—Danda, Dharma Yoga Ashram, Classical Yoga Hindu Academy; an e-mail written to Lighthouse Trails Research

Altogether, Western Yoga has become a launching platform for occultism—the very thing that lies at the heart of Buddhism, Hinduism, and New Age spirituality. Even the Christian church

has been affected by alleged “Yoga for Christians.” Consider the names of such “ministries” that mix Scripture and “Jesus” with Yoga, and then sell it as Christian Yoga exercise: Yahweh Yoga, Holy Yoga; Body Prayer, Christ-Centered Yoga, New Day Yoga, Trinity Yoga, Yoga Devotion, Grounded in Yoga, Be Still Yoga, Atoning Yoga Extending Grace, and many more.



Most Christians would probably acknowledge that occultic practices are the antithesis of biblical Christianity. But when it comes to Yoga—also the outworking of occultism—they seem oblivious. And yet, the philosophies and practices of yogic mediation have the capacity to “unhinge” (dismantle) humans—in every way. These philosophies come from ancient occultism and originally started back in the Garden of Eden. The voice of that old serpent, the Devil and his satanic forces, put forth the exact same lie today that has fueled the world of the occult through all the ages—that humanity can become God. “[Y]e shall not surely die . . . ye shall be as gods” (i.e., like God; Genesis 3:4-5).

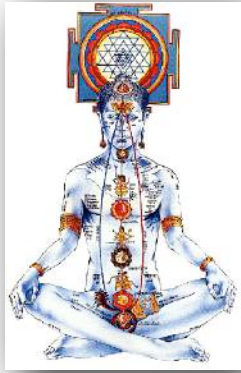
The very nature of many of the meditative yogic practices are engineered to (1) blow out the discernment faculties of human beings, (2) create an insulating barrier of spiritual resistance against the biblical Gospel, and (3) generate personal hostile opposition towards Jesus of Nazareth and His teachings. Consider the difference: the Bible teaches that man is sinful and the wages of sin is death; Jesus Christ, came in the flesh, died on the Cross, and was resurrected, paying the penalty for man’s sin with His own shed blood. He then offers salvation freely to “whosoever” believeth on Him by faith. Yoga (i.e., Hinduism), on the other hand, is completely the opposite. Man is already divine, and that divinity only needs to be “awakened” through Yoga. No sin, thus no need for a Savior. Man will save himself.

In place of God’s Word as the ultimate authority, a new higher authority called “experience” is embraced. Thus, the Jesus Christ of the Bible, the clear teachings of Scripture, and the established historical doctrines of the Christian faith, along with “biblical separation” from occult pagan spirituality, are thrown out of the window.

The reality that practitioners of Yoga, including Christian practitioners, can become physiologically and psychologically “unhinged” is a terrifying consideration. When one yields to the spiritual forces of darkness that fuel the world of yogic spirituality, one ought to be prepared to face dire consequences

—that for millennia yogis in the East have endured, and by which have tragically been destroyed.

Practicing Yoga can result in the severe dismantling of the human personality, resulting in total spiritual devastation, and oftentimes including demonic possession. The respect, honor, and adoration of rats, snakes, monkeys, cows, and the worship of 330 million gods of Hinduism surely ought to speak volumes to the Western Yoga practitioner who thinks he or she can Christianize Yoga or simply turn it into a benign physical exercise program.

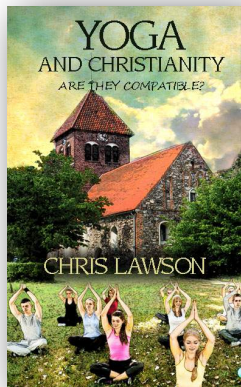


When you stop and realize that increasing numbers of Christian churches are now allowing Yoga classes, and when you look at the sheer facts, this is simply hybridized yogic evangelism in the church. Sadly, the bulk of Western Christians seem to be blind to this.

Paul the Apostle, remembering the sinful disaster that took place in the garden of Eden, warned the early church at Corinth about the danger of spiritual deception in the name of Christ:

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:3)

The question this booklet title asks is: Are Yoga and Christianity compatible? I hope and pray that after reading this material you will answer that question with a resounding No. We live in a world where forces of darkness, of which the Bible speaks, are seeking to deceive us. But Scripture also says we can protect ourselves through His provision. We do not have to walk in spiritual darkness.



Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Ephesians 6: 11-13)

To order copies of *YOGA and Christianity – Are They Compatible?*, visit Lighthouse Trails Publishing - [click here](#).

## Endnotes:

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