

"I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).

Buddhism Examined from a Godly and Biblical Perspective

Recently the subject of Buddhism came to my attention. Therefore, when we visited the library recently, a video caught my eye, and I decided to see it. It was called *God and Buddha: A Dialogue*, featuring Robert Thurman and Deepak Chopra. I had heard of Deepak so often that I wanted to know more of him. I had heard that he had become a Christian, or that his beliefs were in harmony with Christianity.

You will note the title of this paper specifying a true Christian perspective. It both amazes and disturbs me as to what will pass nowadays as being Christian or in agreement with Christ. There are many false notions about true Biblical Christianity, and today I would like to go on record declaring that neither Buddhism nor Deepak Chopra have anything to do with Christ. They are both, in teaching and philosophy, quite contrary to Him, to His teachings, and to the witness of the Holy Scriptures.

Those who profess to be Christian yet believe that Buddhism and various religions are viable options are clearly not Christian in reality. A Christian, by Biblical definition, is someone in whom dwells the Spirit of God, someone who personally knows the Lord Jesus Christ, someone who has no doubt about the veracity and holy inspiration of the Scriptures, because having experienced the power of them.

What do the Scriptures say (referring to none other than the Lord Jesus Christ)?:

"And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12 MKJV).

What did Jesus Himself say?:

"Jesus said to him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6 MKJV).

Either Jesus Christ is the One and Only Way to God or He is not. If He is, then all other ways lead astray to darkness and destruction, because in Him and Him only is life. Here is what a great prophet in Scripture had to say at a time when the name of Baal was well known and the worship of Baal popular:

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long will you halt between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21).

So I say to those who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, concerning all the major religions today.

I will now discuss this subject in relation to the tape I viewed. To begin with, the title of the tape was silly. There is no dialogue between God and Buddha, real or perceived. To suggest the notion is quite ignorant and arrogant. I say it is blasphemous.

Thurman introduces the meeting in a joking way to say there is this dialogue on the agenda.

The dialogue consists of Thurman and Chopra discussing Buddhism and Vedanta, a Hindu philosophy, and how they are so similar and in harmony. This plainly has nothing to do with the God of the Holy Scriptures.

Chopra began by saying, “The essence of Buddhism is the alleviation of suffering.” He said that Buddha was interested in only two questions:

- 1) The cause of human suffering
- 2) The way out of that suffering

That, he said, is the essence of Buddhism. Now, seeing that we all hate to suffer, and we hate to see certain others suffer, particularly those we love most, this is quite an appealing philosophy. We can also surmise how such a philosophy could possibly be in agreement with Christ and the Bible.

Did Christ not come to save us? Did He not come to deliver us from destruction - suffering in all its forms? Yes, of course. Therefore it might seem logical to assume that Buddhism is quite honorable, in agreement with Christianity (at least to those “enlightened”). However, there is nothing further from the truth if we are speaking of God’s truth and not man’s.

Many place Jesus Christ and Buddha on a par. Let me inform readers of a distinct difference: Buddha sought to determine the cause of suffering and find the way out. Many adherents of Buddhism try various disciplines within Buddhism, to find that way. They are promised the way out of suffering if only they will commit themselves to this or that discipline or disciplines.

But Jesus Christ came to suffer! Yes, He came to suffer, and He did so. He suffered many things in His lifetime and finally He suffered cruel death on a Roman cross, at the hands of His own people, as a criminal, liar, blasphemer, and charlatan. He was not any of these things, but was accused so. And He did it all for us.

Now of Jesus Christ, the Scriptures declare:

“Though being a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8 MKJV).

He learned obedience by the things He suffered. The Scriptures also declare that all those who will follow Him must take up the cross, deny self, and follow Him, to the death if necessary, which it will be. Jesus promised them suffering, persecution, and all those things we hate.

Buddha takes the opposite direction and leads us to avoid or alleviate suffering. I know that in following the Lord, I have had to suffer. I see that there is no other way but by the cross, which represents suffering and death. The Bible also teaches that if we do not take up the cross, we are not worthy of being His disciples, and we will not find life. Truly, as the Scriptures testify:

“Yea, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12 MKJV).

That is, they will suffer. Suffering was the order of the day for our Savior, and it is the order for those who believe Him and do His will. We now speak not of the suffering for our sins,

but for our identification with the Lord Himself in a world where all men hate Him. How Buddhism agrees with this, I fail to see.

Chopra says there are, according to Vedanta, five kleshas (Sanskrit for “causes”) of suffering. They are:

- 1) Not knowing the true nature of reality
- 2) Clinging to, grasping, holding to, that which is ephemeral, transitory, illusory, insubstantial, and therefore, not real
- 3) Aversion to, revulsion of, fear of, that which is not real
- 4) Identification with a habitual, false, constricted self or ego
- 5) Fear of death.

Chopra says Vedanta and Buddhism teach, “That’s it! If there are any forms of suffering, they come under one of these categories.”

He goes on to say that there are four ways to freedom from suffering:

- 1) Karma Yoga - reminding yourself that whatever you do, you aren’t doing it, God is.
- 2) Love - which Chopra says is the easiest and most enjoyable way.
- 3) Rajah Yoga - meditation and allied disciplines; searching within, digging into the deep recesses of our selves.
- 4) Jnana Yoga - an intellectual approach; “using the intellect,” Chopra says, “to go beyond the intellect.” (Yes, you read that right!)

Now the main problem with Buddhism and Vedanta is the notion that man can save himself by certain chosen methods. There is not a hint of any inability whatsoever to save one’s self. There is no mention of a Divine Savior or even of a human one (of which, in reality, there is none). Quite the contrary.

Even Buddha is not represented to be a savior, and it is not on record that he ever claimed to be a savior. He simply presumes to show the way to Nirvana, to enlightenment, to a oneness with all of creation and beyond. It is declared that if we but pursue, in our own strength and understanding and will, one or more of these four ways, we will come to freedom from suffering; we will conquer ourselves and discover our “true selves.”

What a contradiction with Biblical teaching! The Bible teaches that no man is good, that we are in a helpless, fallen state, that Jesus Christ died on the cross for our redemption, being the perfect sacrifice for our sins, and was raised from the dead, to live forevermore, and that He is our only hope. We are given the gift of faith to repent and turn to God through Jesus Christ. Believing and obeying, we are saved, if we overcome unto the end by His grace and mercy, all glory to God.

Buddhism teaches that we can achieve the bliss of freedom from pain and suffering ourselves, that it is up to us. As I listened to Thurman and Chopra, I realized that their “deep thinking” and intellectualism left no hope for simple people, for children, for anyone but the “intelligent.” Most uneducated and even average persons would not be able to grasp the concepts these men were so proud of possessing. I can’t claim to do so. And many people who had the intellect would not have the time to devote to these disciplines. That is why we find proverbial gurus sitting on mountaintops or in deserts, their entire time and

energies consumed with attaining unto enlightenment, which, of course, they never accomplish anyway.

I viewed the audience and heard the questions they asked. Some were trying to be so intelligent and perceptive, so wise and educated, using big words, being so pretentious. Others were asking questions, not knowing the issues, or chasing rabbits.

Dear reader, here is what the Scriptures have to say about all this:

"At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the sophisticated and cunning, and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight" (Matthew 11:25-26 MKJV).

What else does God have to say about man's wisdom and power? Here is what beloved brother Paul had to say to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 MKJV

(18) For the preaching of the cross is foolishness to those being lost, but to us being saved, it is the power of God.

(19) For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will set aside the understanding of the perceiving ones."

(20) Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the lawyer of this world? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

(21) For since, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom did not know God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe.

(22) For the Jews ask for a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom;

(23) but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.

(24) But to them, the called-out ones, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

(25) Because the foolish thing of God is wiser than men, and the weak thing of God is stronger than men.

(26) For you see your calling, brothers, that not many wise men according to the flesh are called, not many mighty, not many noble.

(27) But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

(28) and God has chosen the base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not, in order to bring to nothing things that are;

(29) so that no flesh should glory in His presence.

(30) But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made to us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption;

(31) so that, according as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

The apostle Paul was also highly trained and educated before his conversion to Christ. And what did he think of that? Hear him:

Philippians 3:3-11 MKJV

(3) For we are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus

and have no confidence in the flesh;

(4) though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other thinks that he has reason to trust in the flesh, I more.

(5) I was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. As regards the Law, I was a Pharisee;

(6) concerning zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness in the Law, blameless.

(7) But whatever things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

(8) But no, rather, I also count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them to be dung, so that I may win Christ

(9) and be found in Him; not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith,

(10) that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death;

(11) if by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead.

By revelation and experience of God, he knew where it was at. And he was not afraid or ashamed to speak out of his precious knowledge. As he wrote to the Romans:

Romans 1:16-17 MKJV

(16) For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

(17) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Yes, by faith do the just live, not by wisdom or by intellectual acrobatics or by disciplines, either from the East or the West. Deepak, in your wisdom, you are far from God and far from the reality you presume to have. For that I do not condemn you; I merely serve you notice that you are taking a false path.

Of course, there are some truths in these philosophies. That is why so many can be deceived, though they are somewhat familiar with Christian teaching. Did not Jesus say that the very elect would be tried by falsehood? They are not tried by blatant lies.

Let us now take a closer look at the supposed five causes of suffering:

1) Not knowing the true nature of reality

That is true of everyone who has not been redeemed or regenerated. Jesus Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man comes unto the Father but by Me." This is reality; He is the Reality. Without knowing Him, how can we know reality?

Solomon wrote: "The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7).

John wrote: "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. He who believes on the Son has everlasting life, and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him" (John 3:35-36).

Therefore, who can know reality without knowing or having the Lord Jesus Christ?

2) Clinging to, grasping, holding to, that which is ephemeral, transitory, illusory, insubstantial, and therefore, not real

Jesus said that we cannot serve God and mammon (Matthew 6:24). The Bible warns us not to cling to, or pursue, the riches of this world. The things of this world will indeed perish. Neither can we take them with us when we leave this world. Solomon wrote that we ought not to set our hearts on riches, because riches take wing and fly away.

It is true that the things of this world are not true riches, but these things are very real. If not, God would not have given them to whom He chose - Solomon, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, and many others. God is not so silly and devious that He would give unreal things as a blessing to those He loved. They are indeed real, but Buddhism and Vedanta teach that they are not, it seems.

The teachers of Buddhism are full of contradiction. They use and value unreal things as though they are real, yet say they are not real. How can it be otherwise when they oppose the Truth, the embodiment of which is Jesus Christ? Of course, they would deny they opposed Him, but they do, as I am showing you.

They also see Jesus Christ as an “enlightened one,” among several others, but they do not know Him as God. That is where they greatly err, as do not only Buddhists, but also Muslims, and even Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons (“Latter Day Saints”) who presume to be Christian, thinking they have the true understanding of the Bible and its testimony. It is not enough to believe Jesus Christ was a good man or that He set a remarkable example. He **IS** God and Lord of lords.

It is not enough to believe He was a prophet, as were so many others. He is the Sender of all true prophets. He is their Speech. Only God can deliver us, and Jesus Christ is God. (Read our section [Jesus Christ Is God.](#))

3) Aversion to, revulsion of, fear of, that which is not real

Men are very real. They can be and are feared by all, one way or another. However, Jesus said that we ought not to fear them, but God. I see Deepak and Thurman fearing man, not God. They are impressed with the writings and teachings of Buddha and so-called “enlightened ones.” This is respect, or “positive” fear of man, contrary to God and His will. If the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, as the Bible declares, these men are caught in their fear of the wrong kind.

4) Identification with a habitual, false, constricted self or ego

Buddhists fulfill these causes of suffering by their very ways! What they say here is true. Ironically, they deceive themselves by rejecting the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and solidly identifying themselves as their way of victory. According to Scripture, our only hope is a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ being that Ordained One, the Messiah, the Savior of all mankind.

As it is written: “And there is salvation in no other One; for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

I know this: I was not able to be myself, my true self, until the Lord Jesus Christ had

accomplished His work in me. This took many years. Only He could do it.

5) Fear of death

It seems to me that men's striving to perform the disciplines we will discuss next is **because** they fear death! Do they not wish to live? And what man gains victory over death? The Scriptures clearly declare that life is only in the One Who said He **IS** Life Itself.

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

The light of men? Are Buddhists not seeking to be "enlightened"? Christ's life is the light of men. They have no light of their own, yet think to be enlightened by their own power. And what of death? Here is what the Scriptures declare:

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 MKJV

(55) O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

(56) The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law.

(57) But thanks be to God Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 2:14-18 MKJV

(14) Since then the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise partook of the same; that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death (that is, the Devil),

(15) and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

(16) For truly He did not take the nature of angels, but He took hold of the seed of Abraham.

(17) Therefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like His brothers, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of His people.

(18) For in that He Himself has suffered, having been tempted, He is able to rescue those who are being tempted.

Through suffering, the Lord Jesus Christ won the victory for us. Buddhists would presume to despise, or be ignorant of, the sure way of victory accomplished for them and alleviate suffering as well, in order to attain bliss. Though at first appearing to be quite in agreement with Christianity and its principles, how contrary is Buddhism to Christ! It is a matter of God's way versus man's way, God's wisdom versus man's wisdom, God's power versus man's power. But man's power is vain and therefore not an alternative at all. Consider that while God has created all things, man has yet to find a way to create a hair, even though he has a model to copy! But how wise and powerful he thinks himself to be!

"When we know we are God," these people declare, "we connect to all beings through buddhahood." Let me quote the prophet Ezekiel:

"Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre. So says the Lord GOD: Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet you are a man and not God, though you set your heart as the heart of gods...

Will you yet say before him who kills you, I am of the gods? But you are a man, and not God, in the hand of him who kills you" (Ezekiel 28:2,9 MKJV).

The prophet Isaiah prophecies of man:

Isaiah 14:13-15 MKJV

(13) For you have said in your heart, I will go up to the heavens, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.

(14) I will go up above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.

(15) Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the Pit.

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall,” says the Biblical proverb (Proverbs 16:18). Is Buddhism in agreement with Christ and the Bible? Hardly!

Thurman says, “God means, ‘being in love with everything.’” I don’t think it would be so very hard to prove that he and Chopra are not God. I truly believe that it would not be too difficult to provoke them. Tweak their noses unexpectedly and see how far these instructors are in their evolution to enlightenment.

Yet cannot God be provoked? Is He in love with everything? The Bible declares that He hates many things - like pride, lying, swearing falsely, idolatry, and the wicked. It is written:

Proverbs 6:16-19 MKJV

(16) These six the LORD hates; yea, seven are hateful to His soul:

(17) a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

(18) a heart that plots wicked plans, feet hurrying to run to evil,

(19) a false witness who speaks lies, and he who causes fighting among brothers.

Those who pursue Buddhism or Vedanta to free themselves pursue the wind.

Yes, the Scriptures surely teach that God is love (1 John 4:8,10,12,16) and that those who love are born of God. But what is love? How does love enter a man? What is it like? Men can often try to portray love, and some might do a rather impressive job of it, but ultimately, no man can love but that God loves through him. That comes with a new heart that only God can give.

As it is written:

Ezekiel 36:26-29 MKJV

(26) And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

(27) And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do them.

(28) And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers. And you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

(29) I will also save you from all your defilements, and I will call for the grain, and will increase it, and will lay no famine on you.

Those words become fulfilled when Jesus Christ takes over, and only then.

Chopra says, “Love is the ultimate truth at the heart of creation.” True enough! But he goes on to say, “If I start to peel the layers of my soul, I begin to go beyond my constricted, fabricated self and discover who I really am.” What does God say about that? Hear His words by Jeremiah:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17:9-10 MKJV).

Yes, men fool themselves by their own hearts, or rather, are deceived in their own hearts. Who then can peel back the layers of his soul? Who can know himself by his own power? Not man, that is for sure! We need a savior, every one of us, and the Bible is very clear on Who that Savior is.

While at first glance things can look similar, upon closer examination we find them to be very different.

Let us take a look at the four alleged ways to freedom:

1) Karma Yoga - reminding yourself that God does everything, not you. You aren't the one doing it, whatever it is.

The Bible clearly teaches the concept and reality of sin. God does not sin, man does. God does not lie, man does. God does not break His Law, man does. Many things God tells man not to do, yet he does it and suffers for it. Right now, Chopra and Thurman teach that there are four ways to enlightenment - oneness with God, being God. We have already discussed that there is only **ONE WAY**, Jesus Christ, through faith in Him, His death and resurrection. It is not God teaching through Chopra and Thurman, as much as they would like to think so.

2) Love - the easiest and most enjoyable way

Deepak says, "**Love is the ultimate truth at the heart of creation.**" Then why is love listed as number two? And how is it we can practice the end to get to the end? If I travel the ocean to London, is London the ocean and the vessel? If I go to the garden on a cobblestone path to get tomatoes, can I eat the cobblestones? Or can I taste tomato in my footsteps? If love is the easiest and most enjoyable way, why bother with self-analysis, disciplines, and the other three ways? How confused are these people!

3) Raja Yoga - meditation and allied disciplines, searching within

What's to search for if one can love? How much meditation does it take to attain freedom from suffering? Who has the time for it all? What's wrong with love?

I tell you, seeker, that there is an implication here, by listing four ways, that love is not so easy, but very difficult, even impossible. Otherwise they would not be suggesting other alternatives. Why impossible? It takes God, Who is Love, to accomplish His will in man. Man is utterly incapable.

As Jesus said, "With men this is impossible. With God, all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). They ought to heed and believe the words of the One they call an enlightened one. Their words are but ignorant flatteries toward Jesus Christ. In their darkness, they call darkness light, and Light darkness. Woe to them! Watch their end, but for the grace of God Whom they spurn.

4) Jnana Yoga - intellectual approach - using the intellect to go beyond the intellect!!!!

Wouldest thou fly? No wings? Fly and thou shalt have wings to fly! Try and get your head

around that one! What a journey!

Here is what God has to say about all such thinking:

Romans 1:21-25 MKJV

(21) Because, knowing God, they did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful. But they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

(22) Professing to be wise, they became fools

(23) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things.

(24) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves.

(25) For they changed the truth of God into a lie, and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the Creator, Who is blessed forever. Amen.

These men say that when one reaches enlightenment, it is experiential knowledge of immortality that solves all suffering. There is truth here. They say several true things. When Jesus Christ brought me to enlightenment, which He is, I received eternal life or immortality. Jesus said that by faith in Him, I would never die. Thus, I am on the way to solving all suffering, not only for myself, but also for others. What these men fail to realize, however, is that they can only attain this state by Jesus Christ. There is no other way. They do not recognize their need of a savior, the Savior, the **ONLY** Savior. Lacking Him, they have only theory and no reality.

They say that the West is only beginning its renaissance while India's began 2,000 years ago. How ludicrous! How is it that the West has been predominant in wealth and power in the world while India is full of superstition, poverty, and paganism? They worship cows, all sorts of animals and gods, and the Ganges River; they have a caste system, and poverty and disease are rampant. On and on it goes.

There is no doubt that where the influence of Christianity has been, there has been a positive effect, and where there has been less of Christianity, we see deprivation, decadence, depression, death, and damnation. Am I saying that gain is godliness? No, I am not. I am merely asking, if the Indians have renaissance and enlightenment, leading us by 2,000 years, why do they have such dismal results? If theirs is renaissance and enlightenment, let fools steer clear and they will be the better for it.

On this point Deepak and Thurman disagreed. While Thurman praised India for its "deep spirituality," Deepak gently urged Thurman to consider that for the most part, India is quite backward and brutish. I give him credit for that.

They say that Himalayan culture teaches death as liberation. I know that when I have taken up the cross to follow Christ, dying to self, I have been free. Therefore, they again speak that which is true. But again, death can only be emancipating if by the cross of Christ. I see many die that are not set free. Truly, death because of sin is a consequence and not a liberation (the wages of sin is death - Romans 3:23). Only by death in Christ is there liberation. So, again, they are truly way off the mark.

They say that human history has been one of torment. How true! But now they say they

have hope. Why?

- 1) Scientific advancement
- 2) The internet
- 3) Worldwide mass media

They say that collective enlightenment is the answer, and that it cannot be stopped because of these factors. "With all the technology, it will be manifest!" they say. They say that there are many gods and goddesses watching over us, guiding us to our harbors. They say these nurturing beings are there because we are so inept.

How is their thinking so full of darkness and contradiction! God saved men throughout history without science, without computers, without mass media. He is All Powerful, All Knowing, All Loving, All Present, but He needs the advancements of inept mankind to save them?!

They speak of these things like technology and the physical as ephemeral, not real, transitory, illusory, insubstantial; then they speak of them as being our true hope for enlightenment! So the hope, according to them, is not in the Lord Jesus Christ. They even fail to give Buddha any credit here, though he was supposed to have been enlightened, paving the way to enlightenment for others, without the aid of computers or global mass media over 2,500 years ago.

"Professing to be wise, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things" (Romans 1:22-23 MKJV).

They declare that there are seven levels of consciousness:

- 1) Deep sleep - a limited degree of awareness, which everyone experiences.
- 2) Dreams - very real, they say.
- 3) Another dream - our waking state of consciousness. They say we don't know that it is transitory, illusory, ephemeral, insubstantial, and therefore not real.
- 4) The first glimpse of soul - waking from insubstantial reality into glimpsing the soul. "Buddha" means "awake." He was, supposedly, the "awakened one."
- 5) Cosmic consciousness - ever-present awareness after peeling off all layers. We can do it now, they say. In this state, there is no more fear of death, by knowing the unknown.

A little diversion here. Back in 1971, Harry Roder held some pricey weekend Concept-Therapy seminars on the teachings of Thurman Fleet. In these seminars, if attended faithfully, we were promised to enter into "cosmic consciousness." Harry hung a chart up on the front wall displaying the many steps to this blissful state. As we looked on, I asked him what level he had attained. He was silent.

After some moments of awkward silence, someone in the curious audience said, "Sir, that man asked you a question." He suddenly and angrily blurted out, "And he'll be waiting a long time for an answer!" We were all surprised at his reaction. "What had I done?" we all wondered. Seemed to me that one who was promising "cosmic consciousness" would have it, would he not? And if he had it, why would he get so upset with an innocent question?

There is only one answer: These people have a lot of theory and imagination, but precious

little practicality or substance. Therefore, in their wisdom, they are quite insecure. Their houses are built on sand and not on rock, and it often does not take a storm to bring their structures down or at least to expose their weakness.

6) Seeing all in all, an ever-present awareness. I don't know what the difference is between this one and cosmic consciousness, but then, do they?

7) Enlightenment - all perception. The subject and object of perception is actually the same presence. I don't understand.

Now those who teach such states of consciousness can only speak legitimately, authoritatively if they have been there. I have yet to meet such a one. But I have met the Lord Jesus Christ! He has brought me to a consciousness carnal men know nothing of.

He has brought me up from the grave, to live forevermore. I see and hear and perceive that which the carnal mind cannot even imagine. I know that which the greatest intellectual cannot grasp, because it is grasped not by the intellect, but by the spirit. The spirit cannot grasp these things unless quickened (given life). Life in Christ has given me a new dimension, a new life, power, understanding, and purpose foreign to those outside of Christ.

Yes, I have that seventh state. I **AM** that seventh state, though still with infirmity. Yet I am imperceptible to the carnal man standing next to me.

My state or nature did not come by anything I did or am. It came by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is a gift of God, by His sovereign will. It came by His work and not my own.

This same state is promised to all who believe in His Name. They will not need the internet or computers or mass media to get there. They will need only repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ, confessing Him as Lord and Savior, believing He was crucified for our sins and raised from the dead. They who call upon His Name will not be ashamed, I can assure you. It is as simple as that, so simple a child can receive it.

Can I condemn Chopra and Thurman, or anyone else? Not at all! Been there, done all they do. I also thought I was so wise and learned, so advanced beyond these silly people who preached the Bible and spoke of Jesus as Lord and Savior of all. How wrong I was! The Lord Jesus took a hold of me and showed me where the power was! He is it. Case closed. Praise the Lord!

Can I take any credit? Not at all. Praise the Lord! Am I smarter or better than Chopra or Thurman? Not a whit. Those fellows can spin circles around me with their intellectual abilities. Perhaps that is their downfall. It is certainly a handicap. Wise and rich men of the world think they have something and are deceived.

Deepak and Robert, I have arrived, I share it with you, telling you the way, and I hope to see you here one day. Come away from your darkness, deception, and foolishness! Give all praise and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ Who gave Himself for you!

Victor Hafichuk

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