

“What Should Christians Fear?”

1 Corinthians 10: 23-33

This past week there a debate on Nation television between a well known Christian Preacher and Author of countless books, including the one I am teaching from on Wednesday evenings. The debate was over the issue of Christians participating in yoga. Yes, yoga – the exercise.



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“Alright, let’s say I do decide to try yoga, head to the local gym, give it a shot. What am I opening myself up to spiritually that could go against my Christian faith?”

John MacArthur: “Well that would depend on how the yoga is conducted. If it’s just purely exercise, and you’re a strong Christian, it probably wouldn’t have any impact on your faith. But in the big picture, why would Christians want to borrow an expression from a false religion....If you want a whole life, if you want your life to be what it should be, you don’t put yourself in some weird physical position, empty your mind, center on yourself and try to relieve your stress. You go to the word of God, to the gospel of Jesus Christ, you embrace in faith the sacrifice of Christ in his death and resurrection as your savior and redeemer. God comes, regenerates you, transforms your life, makes you a new creation, and you’re saved and you’re on your way to heaven, and you can live a life of peace and joy.”

I agree with what he is saying but I think he is confusing the issue here. Folks, I can do many “Christian” actions in life all in the name nothingness. I can feed the hungry just because I feel sorry for them. I gave give to the church all in the name of a tax break. I can come to church every Sunday and not ever know God. The same is true from anything I do. I exercise all week long and I assure you I do not consciously praise God while I am doing it. I exercise all week long and I am not focusing my mind to anything but trying to get it to convince my aching, burning muscles to keep moving because it is really good for them. I have been taught some stretching exercises that really help my back. It doesn’t take more than a few glances to know my posture is not the best and stretching really helps. I found out these awesome stretches are actually a few yoga moves.

Listen to me church – You control what you worship. No amount of running, jumping up and down, stretching, or breathing technique decided who or what you worship.

I found this quote from people discussing this issue on-line. One lady said this: “These are postures that are offered to the 330 million Hindu gods. Yoga postures really are offerings to the gods. If you do these postures and you do this breathing technique then you will be accepted by one of the hindu Gods. That’s the real danger.”

As I was reading this I was having to practice some breathing techniques of my own so I wouldn’t explode out of frustration. But it got worse as I read on...

The lady making these statements has her own Christian exercise video and she is a certified personal trainer. Her contention is that her video show you “moves” that praise God and not Hindu Gods.

Romans 12:1-2 says we are to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to God.

I agree there is a world out there that we all should fear, Christian or not. But I do not see why we have to go off the deep end and start spewing radical non-sense that causes people to look at us like we are nuts. The only way yoga, or anything else (which we are getting to) is working against God is if you chose to use it to work against God or if you are so weak-minded that you do not know if you are working against God or not.

I have had people tell me that certain “styles and colors” of clothing were blasphemous to God. Give me a break. Dressing in all black, for the sake of the way it looks, is not a concern of God’s. If dressing in all black with a t-shirt that is profane in the name of God then yes, that concerns Him. Personally, if you dress in an all canary yellow outfit with matching shoes and socks that would worry me more. If you dress in a certain way because you want to symbolize you hate God, that concerns him. If you dress a certain way because you want to symbolize a snappy dresser, or a slouchy dresser for that matter, then I think God has better things to worry about

I get so tired of the legalism people claim in this world all in the name of some greater good! Is that not one reason God sent his only son into this world forever ago?

Now here is the biggest secret of the whole day. I mean this one is huge. I am fairly certain that the determining factor if you spend eternity in heaven or hell is not contingent on the fact you have ever had a beer or not. I am fairly certain that alcohol, in and of itself, is not on the heavenly radar screen. I know, it sounds crazy. Then why do so many Christian circles warn against alcohol consumption? Because if you can’t handle alcohol or if you get addicted to alcohol that is a problem and no one, including myself, wants that, so people just say stay away from it. Let’s also stay away from sugar because that makes us gain weight and can cause diabetes. Let’s also stay away from caffeine because that is not healthy. Let’s also stay off the streets because people get killed everyday in their vehicles. Don’t eat red meat, don’t drink anything but water, don’t, don’t, don’t, don’t..... God talks about a whole bunch of things we should not do but we do not focus on certain things, such as gluttony, but we do on others such as someone having a drink of wine.

Seriously, we have choices to make every day. A few weeks ago I said that every decision we make goes back to the garden of Eden. We make choices between life and death all day long. Which tree are you eating from? Be smart. I am serious about that. This is not a sermon to give you justification to do everything you want. In fact it is the opposite. I am telling you that you can do anything you want but there are consequences for your actions.

If you can do yoga and stretch your muscles and calm yourself down without praying to some false God all at the same time, then do it. If you feel tempted to go against God while you do yoga, then don’t. If you can consume alcoholic beverages to a degree that you don’t get addicted or to the point where you don’t make stupid choices like driving while intoxicated or beating up someone, then that is your choice. There are some health benefits and risks in alcohol. If you like to dress in all black clothes (or canary yellow) or dress in flip-flops and shorts then have at it.

Remember – it is about why you are doing it and what you are communicating from yourself to God. “Everything is permissible”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible”—but not everything is constructive. As Christian there is nothing...nothing...nothing...short of telling God to get lost that will cause God to abandon you once you have truly accepted him.

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everything is constructive.

There will be a day of judgment. Know that for sure. God is going to judge our actions in wrath or righteousness depending upon the position of our allegiance to him. It is not a question if we are a sinner or not a sinner, because we are all sinners. The question is either we are a Christian or not a Christian. Either I claim Jesus Christ as the son of God, sent into this world as the word made flesh, dying for the atonement of my sin, and the fact the he was raised from the dead and went to heaven to be with God, sent himself back to us in the form of the holy spirit, and I know that there will be a day of judgment where I will be held accountable for my actions is what counts the most.