

General Topics :: Beauty in Roman Catholicism

Beauty in Roman Catholicism, on: 2005/9/13 14:41

I've been looking for a place to go on retreat during what promises to be to be a trying time in my life, starting 7 Oct.

There happens to be an AoG "honorBound" retreat, but that just doesn't sing to my heart.

What my spirit is really crying out for is a comtemplative monastic sort of retreat, and I was lead to place that looks just what I'm looking for, and it happens to be a Benedictine monastery.

The whole point of this post is that I found a paper on "lectio divina".

Quote:  
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That just set me on fire, and it happens to be something which originated out of the roman church.

let me give you the whole URL:

(<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>) Lectio Divina

My point of the whole post is this, within the roman church, I'll bet there are more things we can appropriate for worship t  
hat point us towards the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and the worship of God.....away with popery...yes!! away with the wor  
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emy who wishes to divide the WHOLE Bride of Christ. I believe we should love and embrace all brethern *who love Jesus*  
.

The Lectio Divina is about loving Jesus.

I forward my thoughts in love.

Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism - posted by Tex\_Hill (), on: 2005/9/13 15:56

So should we accept Mormons as "Christians" since they claim they believe in "Christ", even though by their own teachi  
ngs Christ and Satan are brothers?

Catholics may love Christ, but that doesn't negate the fact that they believe that His death at Calvary was insufficient to  
pay their sin debt. Why else do they continue to "sacrifice" Christ in the eucharist when He died once and for all in order  
that we may be saved. Why do Catholics believe that they must suffer here on earth or in Purgatory to pay for their sins  
when the Bible says that our works are as filthy rags? After all, didn't Jesus say "It is finished" on the cross?

Is there beauty in Catholicism? Sure, but the harlot has beauty as well.

**Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/13 15:58**

I took a look at the site and it seems very intriguing. I have to agree that there is a need to slow down, get rid of all the hectic voices within us and around us, and be silent before the Lord.

Just like attending church, or any religious activity, this can be either helpful or unhelpful – the difference lies within your own hearts. If you are truly seeking the Lord, he will reveal himself to you, for he has promised to do so. If entering this experience is what you need, then God can open the doors for you to take part.

The main thing that I would be concerned about is if the leaders try to take control of your mind, will, and emotions. That is not necessarily a fault of the program but of those who lead it. As you know, that happens in any church – including our evangelical churches. It is always wrong to usurp the place of the Spirit. On the other side of that issue, I must add, that no one can control us unless we let them. That is why we must submit to the Lord first and foremost.

I agree with you that the RC has many helpful forms of worship that Protestants have tossed out because of fear and prejudice.

Here is another thought that has been true for my own life: Sometimes God puts us in unfamiliar territory just to undo some of the patterns, traditions, and viewpoints that we are stuck in. (but don't realize) That helps us to see things differently, more objectively perhaps. That is why changing denominations can be helpful.

Does that help?  
Diane

**Re:, on: 2005/9/13 16:56**

I don't know enough about what Neil is talking about to offer any opinions about it. I would be very cautious of anything that comes from the RCC. Deception is beautiful... if it wasn't people wouldn't fall for it.

Not saying what Neil is seeking is wrong. Just use caution, my brother.

Krispy

**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/13 17:39**

Krispy and Tex\_Hill,  
Neil has asked for thoughts on a specific organization and has also included a web link.  
Why don't you read it and make comments on any aspects of the article that you may be concerned about. That would be more helpful than blanket judgments against the entire denomination.  
Diane

**Re: Beauty, on: 2005/9/13 17:59**

2Co 11:1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

2Co 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

2Co 11:3 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.

2Co 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another spirit*, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

Brother Neil, if their "Gospel" is Wrong, (even if it were called "protestant"), then they have a 'different' Jesus and a 'different' Spirit .... but counterfeit spirits "feel" good, 'look' good, 'seem good', and that is why they carry such 'magnetism', because they 'are' or 'appear' *spiritual*, but in the end, we are deceived .... guaranteed.

You will either come back feeling more of a 'distance' from your "Bible Only" (protestant) brothers OR you will hurry to be back with them, 'quickly'.

Nee, for just one said, "if a man thinks that he can't be deceived, he already is."

Lucifer stood behind God's throne, and was created to bring God 'Glory' in Heaven and to lead the other Angels in "Worship" to the One and Only True GOD ... so if anyone has "been there, done that", and sure knows how to make it "feel" and 'look' right, it's Satan.

Lucifer was 'also' described as having "beauty". The "beauty of deception" or the deception of beauty.

Yes, they 'will' come 'in His Name' and say He is "Christ" ... "Luk 21:8 And HE said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in My Name, saying, I Am Christ, and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them."

And about this 'merged religious system' of these last days, He said, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. "

Yehoshua/Jesus IS THE 'TRUTH' .... where the Full Truth of His Sacrifice is not then HIS "true" SPIRIT Cannot Be, because the True Spirit of God will ONLY testify to Truth and ALL the Truth, about the Son and His redemptive work, ETC.

The 'Holy Spirit', is called The Spirit of TRUTH and HE cannot endorse error nor dwell in it's 'midst'.

Not saying all Catholics are not saved ... but they also need to "come out". As do Protestants who do not "walk in TRUTH".

I just think you've been abused & spiritually *wounded* far too much from some 'brethren' (Prov 18:14). You may come off 'sounding' hard, but God knows your heart is more 'tender' than the vast majority out there. Wounds can make us more 'susceptible to 'other things' Neil.

And the Lord said, Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat, but HE is praying for you.

Stand on these verses and make them your signature if you have to ...

Phi 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

Phi 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Phi 3:10 That I may KNOW Him, and the power of HIS resurrection, and the fellowship of HIS sufferings, being made conformable unto HIS death;

Phi 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Phi 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Phi 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Phi 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Because I've been there with the Catholic mystique, etc. and I love you brother Neil, though I'd sworn off posting, I broke that, because it was you.

Please pray on this more and 'Sanctuary' with & in HIM, in His Love.

Annie

**Re:, on: 2005/9/13 21:29**

"Tex Hill",

did you read the WHOLE paper on Lectio Divina?

that's the main thrust of what I was speaking of; the practice of "Divine Reading" of Scripture in an individual and a group context.

Within that paper on the practice of Divine Reading, there is nothing on romanism, it is all Christ-centric.....did you read that paper?

My theory is that there are elements within different churches that we can appropriate.....the episcopal churches have GORGEOUS stained glass, the quakers have "worship sharing", etc etc.

What I do not want (if possible) to happen is this thread become yet another rancorous diatribe against the roman church, I'm looking for the Jesus within an element of worship called the "lectio divina".

**Krispy, on: 2005/9/13 21:37**

here's a suggestion....go read the paper on "Lectio Divina"...then you will know enough to comment

<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>

**Our dear Annie, on: 2005/9/13 21:51**

Bless you bless you blessyou

Quote:  
-----Because I've been there with the Catholic mystique, etc. and I love you brother Neil, though I'd sworn off posting, I broke that, because it was you.  
-----

I'm a Jew, there is no mystique to me about the roman church, too many of my kin have been killed, or forced to convert at the hands of the roman church. But since I received Christ in my heart, I have no fear of man, any man, or of any church....nor do I hate them anymore....

What I really like about the lectio divina is that it helps one to embrace Christ in a way that is supernatural and mysterious, high priestly.....anything that helps us put on the clothes of a high priest carrying prayers and supplications up to the Throne of God, I love.....anything that we can use to plumb the mystery of Christ, I love.

These new agers know NOTHING, they think they have the corner on mysticism, or the Mystery of God...they have NOTHING....

oh Annie, to be caught up in high places with God, who could ask for more?

That's what sickens me about these prosperity doctrine preachers.....I rather be kneeling alone on a cold hard stone floor swept up in Jesus' embrace, than in some converted sports arena listening to a bright shiny preacher who looks like a Fortune 500 CEO telling me how I can have everything I want from God.....where's the mystery in that?

like Art Katz said, 'whens the last time you left a meeting speechless coz you came face to face with the Living God?' (I

paraphrase)

But thanks , dear one, for your concern that I get swept up into some seductive apostasy.

As long as one stays steeped in prayer, stays in the Word, and keeps their thoughts FIXED on Jesus, one can never go wrong.

He is so glorious.

**Re: Good question Neil - posted by Compton (), on: 2005/9/14 0:11**

Neil isn't asking us to consider the RCC gospel. He is asking us to appreciate specific aspects of their spiritual life and practice. We Protestants may not like mystery...we like our theology to fit together like gear and cogs that tick along like Newton's laws.

This worked great during the past 200 years, but is showing itself insufficient in an age where people no longer have faith in Newtonian physics, and even modern secularism. We sometimes act as if the Gospel is a machine that can be disassembled and explained in a technical manual. Yet 21st century people are wondering if man can know anything from mere apologetics. Not even science is foolproof anymore...this is a new day of opportunity for the Church.

So, if we must use phobic words like "mysticism" or "harlot" then let's do so only for ideas that are heretical to the gospel, not our personal sensibilities. I don't see any problem for Neil if he finds that reading and listening to the scriptures via the Lectio Divina method fruitful. It sounds like Neil wants to immerse himself in fellowship with the Word, and to bathe in the words of God. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you"

Personally I feel we place too much emphasis on volume reading...i.e. through the bible in a year and such. I can remember spending months meditating the first few verses in John 1, going over and over them trying to emerge past the text into the reality they contained. Admittedly I could not ever do so but having utterly failed did enable me to see that Christ is both knowable and unknowable.(divine and unsearchable) Within my rediscovery of the enigmatic mystery of Jesus, there is awe and worship of Him. (edit: eternal, non created...)

If vital doctrine is not being challenged then I say it sounds like a blessed refuge Neil. We shouldn't think God's arm is so short that he can't reach into the various expressions of Christian faith to touch mankind. Jesus saved even during the dark ages.

Christianity is older than the 18th century! If we are only willing to go back as far as Wesley then maybe we are spiritual dandies unable to face the world as it is. We not only have the legacy of the Roman church to dig through, but also the eastern orthodox, the Celtic, and the South American traditions. In a few hundred years, should the Lord tarry, we will have new Christian traditions from southern hemisphere nations and Asia. Are we willing to believe that all of these peoples of different cultural expressions can remain of one Spirit? It's too bad that the word "ecumenical" has come to mean heretical because Christ is coming back for one Church and they all won't be Pentacostals.

These other church traditions may not have the important sola fide doctrines that we hold to, but they have noble merits in other areas such as spiritual poverty, piety, and devotion that the 21st century American church is in sore need of. We are not wrong in our focus, but we are incomplete in our spectrum...Neil's post is a welcome recognition that there is more at the table of the Lord than the spiritual hamburgers and milkshakes being marketed by mainstream Christianity.

I know much of what I said here can be misconstrued...for what it's worth let me confess my belief that the finest hour for the church (western) was during the reformation, just so you know where my head and heart is. (I'm old school)Yet, I do not think it was the only hour of the church...

MC

**Re: Our dear Annie - posted by jouko (), on: 2005/9/14 0:54**

Hello neilgin1.

You are to be commended for your enthusiastic search and understanding of the word of God. It is truly inspiring. May the Lord bless you in your pursuit.

But, and I hope you take no offence from this. I believe you are entering a path that is not Biblical. I do believe Annie's warning is real and good.

Thomas Merton was the person that is most known in the contemplative prayer circles and if you check out his life you will notice the close connection with eastern mysticism. He was a RCC.

I read through the explanation of this kind of prayer-reading-the-word to get closer to God. To engage into this prayer you are required to;

1. Silence the mind by focusing on the breath.
2. Silence the mind by repetition of a word or phrase etc.
3. Silence the mind by focusing on a subject.

Further on the imagination also will play a part in this type of activity.

By breaking down the scripture you are reading and meditating on it you will not understand the whole meaning but will enter into a mantra relationship with a word instead of a relationship with the Word who became flesh and dwelt with us.

Matthew 6:7 tells us not to use vain repetitions and this kind of prayer will surely lead to that.

I believe you are entering into something that will lead you away from the God, and His word that you have the desire to know in a deeper way. I believe you also want a subjective experience with God or at least this prayer thing will lead you to that, but do you really know if it is the risen Lord you will meet in these encounters?

One of the leading proponents of this kind of prayer is Richard Foster. He says; "I also want to give a word of precaution. In the silent contemplation of God we are entering deeply into the spiritual realm, and there is such a thing as a supernatural guidance that is not divine guidance. While the Bible does not give us a lot of information on the nature of the spiritual world, we do know...there are various orders of the spiritual beings, and some of them are definitely not in cooperation with God and his way! But for now I want to encourage you to learn and practice prayers of protection..."All dark and evil spirits must now leave".

Further in the same book there is a warning;

"Contemplative prayer is not for the novice. I do not say this for any other form of prayer. All are welcome, regardless of proficiency or expertise, to enter freely into adoration and meditation and intercession and a host of other approaches to prayer. But contemplation is different. While we are equally precious in the eyes of God, we are not all equally ready to listen to "God's speech in his wondrous terrible, gentle, loving, all embracing silence".

Prayer: Finding the heart's true home. Richard Foster.

Dear Neilgin1.

Where do we find this prayer approach in the Bible? You already have an access to the throne of God, don't use an alternative way that will lead you away from God.

Heb 9:11 But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation,

Heb 9:12 nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.

With love  
jouko

**The missing link - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2005/9/14 1:45**

Hi Jouko,

Is there a possible link between what you are saying and meditation?

**Re: The missing link - posted by jouko (), on: 2005/9/14 4:29**

Hello ZekeO.

Depends on what kind of meditation you are talking about? TM certainly has. I used to have a lot of time waiting for the train going home and there was a lot of TM:s on offer, but for some reason I was never tempted to find out what it represented. I thank the Lord for that. There were times when I felt very lonely, but thinking about those times now, I see that my relationship with the Lord wasn't what it should have been. Being lonely and not having the right relationship with the Lord is a very good place for satan to plant and lead you into something that isn't according to God's will.

Meditation means, and this I had to check to understand, I'm a Finn after all;

Think deeply or focus one's mind for a period of time, in silence or with the aid of chanting, for religious or spiritual purposes or as a method of relaxation. Then you have; meditate upon which is think deeply or carefully about something, plan mentally; consider.

I believe we are talking about emptying one's mind in this context, the contemplative prayer. I can't find that in the Bible. I can find this and more though:

Psa 49:3 My mouth shall speak wisdom; And the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

Psa 119:97 Oh how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

Psa 119:99 I have more understanding than all my teachers; For thy testimonies are my meditation.

Phi 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

I'm no expert by any imagination. If you would like something to read, visit [www.lighthouse-trails.com](http://www.lighthouse-trails.com) they have some good books by people who have been involved in these types of meditations.

Blessings  
jouko

**Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism - posted by Boyo, on: 2005/9/14 5:57**

Dear Neil

I remember periods in my christian walk where there has been a dryness or sense of distance from God, whether due to my own fault or simply God teaching me to walk by faith and not emotion. One thing i must say is that we are vulnerable at those times and satan seizes his advantage to make approaches. Confidence in our own ability or maturity to handle ourselves in his territory can become our downfall. I must admit i have been attracted many times by the serenity and sense of peace that Catholicism seems to express, but unless one "guards their hearts" you can become ensnared, much like people i know who having been in a period of "searching for truth" have rejected the gospel and embraced islam claiming it made more sense to them. Entering into and gaining a closer connection with God will always be by the route of simplicity, obedience and humbleness of Heart "become like a child" brother, and Christ will come to you. Renounce all pride, spiritual and carnal submit to Pastoral counsel lest you be led astray, satan is a master of enticing via good intentions. My continual and daily prayer is "God give me that child like faith, keep me from pride lest i fall, lead me in the way of true brokenness and contrition".

Proverbs 30:7-9 Two things have I required of thee; deny me not before I die: 8 remove from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: 9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Neilgin1 wrote:

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But I feel, that their are beautiful elements of communion that we can keep, AND that their are those WITHIN this church, who love Jesus with all their hearts.

My spirit tells me if we work overtime to shriek at how apostate and hellbound they are, we play into the hands of the enemy who wishes to divide the WHOLE Bride of Christ. I believe we should love and embrace all brethern *who love Jesus*.

The Lectio Divina is about loving Jesus.

**Re:, on: 2005/9/14 8:26**

Neil... I didnt read it only because I have not got the time right now. I will when I get a chance. This is why I said I dont know enough about it. All I said was I would proceed with caution with anything related to the RCC. I think that is a fair and balanced comment I made. I have not condemned it... only proposed caution.

To the person who chastised me (for what, I dont know exactly) and called the RCC a "denomination"... it is not a "denomination". It is a false religion.

Krispy

**Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/14 9:26**

Neil,

Several years ago I worked for the US Census Bureau in the field visiting many and/or all the places in any given community. One of these places was what is called locally a monestary. I looked forward to going there, having heard a lot of positive things about it. They offered programs just like you described. I have met people who have been there and declared it wonderful. Before I went I asked the LORD for discernment when I went there - this having nothing to do with census work, please understand - but with spirituality and their work.



Neil, I went there and met the head of their group. And Neil, the place was so COLD, FRIGID. The woman looked at me with hard eyes. There was NOTHING there that spoke of the loving kindness of Jesus, the kind they want to portray to the world. I asked God and he answered. The answer was a loud NO.

Just thought I would share my experience and hope it might be a help...

ginnyrose

**Re: From a former Catholic, on: 2005/9/14 10:16**

The "beauty" of the Catholic Church appeals to the flesh, as all religion does. The beauty of Christianity appeals to the Spirit, and places all its hope in the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

I was born into this church, went to catholic school all 12 years. I never once heard I needed to be born again. I was as lost as any other person.

The Catholic Church is one of the most corrupt institutions on the planet. Its bank is the world's largest financial institution while its members suffer in most of the world. It has no life because it has no spirit.

Run back in time to George Fox and rediscover the blessing of your faith and your position in the church. One Head, Jesus Christ. All others are on the same plain in the body.

Religious hoopla and pagentry are never a replacement for personal relationship with God, regardless of how it is packaged.

I know this seems harsh, but Paul said that if anyone preach any other gospel other than what He preached, let them be accursed. You will not find the moving of the Spirit in the accursed, I don't care how sweet and cordial it may appear.

But for the grace of God, I could still be in this religious system of deception and treachery. Please pray for Catholics. With God all things are possible.

In Christ Jesus,

Lahry

**Re: - posted by mloaks, on: 2005/9/14 11:32**

With all the above said, I felt compelled to write re yr original subject.

1st, tks for sharing. Many of us understand yr context; sorry the usual RCC baiters and haters used it as a sounding board.

LK 11:49 "Master," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."

50 "Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you." NIV

2nd, as far as any believer from the Republic of Texas should be concerned, their big job should be to stop all the murder that is done in the name of capital punishment. At least the RCC has got that right.

3rd, Jews are still God's chosen people. And most under His wrath.

Lastly, I would say that there is no Scripture that implies that anyone who worships with Roman Catholics cannot possibly be led, or fed, by the Holy Spirit.

**Re: Keep your own mind - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/14 13:59**

I feel that if we merely respond with a knee-jerk reaction, we'll miss some important and useful insight... which hit close to home.

Religious repetition and patterns have always been very appealing and comforting, perhaps because that gives a sense of stability, predictability, and control.

Taize, a popular form of worship in the RCC uses simple repetitive chant-like songs. The purpose of this activity, according to Brother Rogers, the founder of the Taize Community ( I can't find the article) is to free the mind of the clutter of life, and get focused on spiritual truths. In itself, that is not a bad idea -- we could use help disciplining our minds.

Br. Rogers wished to avoid putting any offensive words in the chants. This sensitivity can also have a downside, making us a slave to political correctness and those who are easily offended. I notice that Jesus was not afraid to "offend" people -- esp the pride of the religious leaders. He loved them too much to passively allow them to continue in their delusions.

Having said all that, I noticed that the charismatic circles have been chanting for some time, though they would likely be offended to hear it labeled as such. They call it Praise and Worship, experiencing the Spirit, having a "touch", soaking, or whatever other terms. In itself, that can have good aspects to it. However, contemporary music is often used as a medium to work up the mood into an ecstatic state "of worship" through extended repetition. The mind goes passive, supposedly so it can be filled with the Spirit. The worshippers seem spaced out, in a trance, with glazed-over eyes while they are "worshipping".

However, after watching some people who have been practicing this ritual for an extended time, I'm convinced that their religious habits have not benefited their minds. I can't hold a conversation about anything too deeply spiritual. Through repetitive mindless religious activity, they have lost the ability to think, discern, understand, judge wisely.

Church worship, generally speaking, can be put under this same umbrella. A vast majority of Sunday worshipers leave their brains at the door when they walk into the church. They don't want to think, just feel good. They don't question what should be questioned.

There has always been heavy criticism directed towards any form of worship that is not one's own preference -- old or new, protestant, or RC, charismatic, or traditional... But the bottom line is this: Each participant must think for himself. He must not sell out his mind. Even a Scripture reading is meaningless if he doesn't actively meditate on it himself and take it to heart.

So, the responsibility rests on the worshipper.

The great spiritual thinkers of the past, ex Thomas a Kempis, Brother Lawrence, St Francis of Assisi, etc did not passively submit to the religious trends of their day, even though they may have remained in it. They used their MINDS, and as a result they had something of immense value to offer to countless generations. Their writings transcend any denominational boundaries.

Diane

**Re: - posted by Nellie, on: 2005/9/14 14:01**

Amen, Lahry.

God Bless

Nellie :-)

**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/14 14:27**

Quote:  
-----The beauty of Christianity appeals to the Spirit,  
-----

Just thought you should change the word Christianity to Christ.

Christianity (religion) appeals to the flesh.

The beauty of CHRIST appeals to the new nature - not the old.  
Diane

**Dear Jouko,, on: 2005/9/14 15:15**

you can call me Neil if you want.

you wrote:

Quote:  
-----Where do we find this prayer approach in the Bible? You already have an access to the throne of God, don't use an alternative way  
that will lead you away from God.  
-----

"No, the Word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so that you may obey it."

Deuteronomy 30:14.....and you can tie Romans 10:9 to that also.

**Re: - posted by Tex\_Hill (), on: 2005/9/14 15:21**

Quote:  
-----With all the above said, I felt compelled to write re yr original subject.

1st, tks for sharing. Many of us understand yr context; sorry the usual RCC baiters and haters used it as a sounding board.  
LK 11:49 "Master," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."  
50"Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you." NIV  
-----

The key to this verse is that the man was casting out demons in Christ's name. The Catholic Church is certainly not working in Christ's name today, nor has it at any time in history.

The Catholic Church has done more to hurt the cause of Christ than any other entity. It's only concern is itself. Why else force priests to be celibate and to give all their possessions to the Church.

The Catholic Church is also not for us by a long shot. Have we forgotten the Inquisition? The Catholic Church has never rescinded the decrees that led to this terror. As a matter of fact, even today Protestant missionaries have been threatened with imprisonment in countries where the Catholic Church is the official state church. Doesn't sound like they are for us does it.

Quote:  
-----  
2nd, as far as any believer from the Republic of Texas should be concerned, their big job should be to stop all the murder that is done in the name of capital punishment. At least the RCC has got that right.  
-----

Wrong again. Perhaps this would help:

*The Bible and Capital Punishment*

*By Gregory Koukl*

*I. The Bible and Capital Punishment*

*A. Capital punishment was commanded by God in the Old Testament.*

*1. It preceded the Mosaic Law.*

*Gen 9:6 Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.*

*2. It was based on the dignity of man, i.e. man's transcendent value.*

*Gen 9:6 Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.*

*3. It was commanded in the Mosaic Law.*

*a. Twenty-one different offenses called for the death penalty in the Old Testament.*

*b. Only three include an actual or potential capital offense, by our standards.*

*c. Six are for religious offenses.*

*d. Ten are for various moral issues.*

*e. Two relate to ceremonial issues.*

*4. "But King David wasn't put to death for his capital crimes."*

*a. David understood what justice demanded in this case: "As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die." 2 Sam 12:5*

*b. If God chose to set aside punishment, that doesn't mean the punishment is unjust when it is executed. God was the one who required capital punishment in many instances.*

*B. Capital punishment was assumed in the New Testament.*

*1. God ordains governing authorities:*

*a. Jn 19:11 Jesus answered , "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above."*

*b. Rom 13:1-2 Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore, he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

*c. 1 Pet 2:13-14 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.*

*2. Those governments may practice capital punishment.*

*a. Rom 13:3-4 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is*

*evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.*

*b. Acts 25:11 If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.*

*C. Jesus' ethic of love and forgiveness doesn't disallow capital punishment.*

*1. "But Jesus would forgive."*

*a. This argument proves too much.*

*1) It becomes an argument against any punishment what-so-ever.*

*2) What should we do with the criminal we've forgiven?*

*a) Life in prison instead of capital punishment?*

*b) But Jesus would forgive.*

*b. Jesus never challenged the validity of the death penalty.*

*1) In Jn 8:3-11, for example, there were no witnesses left to testify against the woman caught in adultery (the Law required at least two witnesses).*

*2) Jesus actually upheld the Law here, He didn't abrogate it, but He did so in a way that wouldn't allow the evil designs of the Scribes and Pharisees to be accomplished.*

*c. Jesus asked God to forgive, not Caesar; He didn't suggest civil punishment or capital punishment was inappropriate.*

*d. We must argue for the coherence and consistency of both Testaments.*

*1) The question is not, "Was Jesus right or was Moses right?"*

*2) We must also factor in Paul and Peter.*

*2. "Jesus was crucified."*

*a. I'm not sure what the point is here? Yes, Jesus was the victim of capital punishment, but what follows from that?*

*b. The real issue regarding Jesus was not capital punishment, but His innocence.*

*1) Peter assails the act of handing over an innocent man to godless executioners.*

*2) Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know--this Man, delivered up by the pre-determined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (Acts 2:22-23)*

*3. But what about forgiveness?*

*a. God's mercy is always available in His court.*

*b. Man's court is another matter, governed by different biblical responsibilities.*

*D. One simply can't say that capital punishment is patently immoral on biblical grounds.*

*1. Jesus did not "abolish the Law,"*

*He fulfilled it, but not in the sense that all laws are wiped from the books. Then we would have no punishment for any biblical crimes.*

*2. Matt 5:17-19*

*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.*

-----

## *II. Retributionism vs. Rehabilitationism*

*A. Each position is based on a particular view of man.*

### *1. Rehabilitationism*

- a. Man is sick, needing healing.*
- b. Man is a machine needing fixing.*

### *2. Retributionism*

- a. Man is a free moral agent who makes choices for which he can be held responsible for.*
- b. Man is worthy of praise, resulting in reward, or blame, deserving punishment.*

## *B. The case for retributionism*

### *1. Man a free moral agent.*

- a. He is capable of choosing good or bad behavior.*
  - b. He may be influenced by his environment, but not ultimately controlled by it.*
  - c. We have an immediate awareness of our moral natures, that we freely make moral choices.*
  - d. It seems to make sense to praise and reward good behavior. If we're not responsible for our choices neither blame nor praise make any sense.*
  - e. If we are not free agents, then we are determined and therefore not responsible for our behavior, either good or bad.*
- B.F. Skinner was right; we've got to bite the bullet and realize that we're "beyond freedom and dignity."*

### *2. Crime is not pathological, deserving rehabilitation, but moral, deserving punishment.*

*a. The goal of justice is penal, not remedial, moral, not therapeutic.*

*b. Two purposes of capital punishment:*

- 1) Justice demands punishment of the guilty.*
- 2) Goodness demands protecting the innocent in society.*

*a) "Capital punishment is to the whole society what self-defense is to the individual." The Ethics of Life and Death J.P. Moreland, p. 115.*

*b) Dennis Prager: "We have a war going on here between murderers and society, but only one side is allowed to kill."*

*3. The punishment should fit the crime (lex talionis).*

*4. Capital punishment fits capital crimes (crimes that involve the loss of life).*

C. Objections to retributionism

1. Arguments that prove too much.

a. Many arguments against capital punishment prove too much because they apply with equal force against any punishment at all.

b. "Capital punishment is applied unfairly."

1) Even if this were true, the injustice here applies to those that got away, not to those that got punished. It's never unjust to punish a guilty man if the punishment itself fits the crime (*lex talionis*). The injustice is remedied by applying it more often, not less.

2) Better unequal justice than no justice at all.

3) If one man is paid for a job (he gets what he deserves) and another isn't, how do you rectify the inequity? You don't take away what the first man deserves, withholding his pay because the second man didn't get paid. That would double the injustice.

c. "Innocent people get condemned."

1) This is a criticism of any system of justice, not a particular type of punishment. Life is flawed, not capital punishment.

2) Why must we accept a philosophy that says it's better for 100 guilty people to go free than for one innocent person to be condemned?

3) Guilty people repeat crimes that injure and even kill other innocent people.

4) "But death can't be undone." No punishment can be undone.

5) Our attempts at improving justice here must be at the level of the process of adjudication making any determination of guilt more trustworthy.

2. Other objections:

a. "How can you be for capital punishment but against abortion" (the "seamless garment" argument)?

1) The term "Pro-life" is actually a misnomer. Our case is not for every one's life or every form of life. Pro-lifer's are against the unjust taking of innocent human life, particularly the life of the unborn child.

2) The right to life is not an absolute; it can be forfeited. This moral right is only *prima facie*; it stands only until challenged by some greater law, like justice or protecting the lives of the innocent.

3) We also have a right to freedom, but it can be properly overridden with incarceration when certain conditions are met.

4) An unborn child has committed no crime that forfeits its life.

b. "Capital punishment is cruel and unusual."

1) It's not cruel and unusual, but rather the exact punishment that fits the crime.

2) This is an appeal to the language of the Bill of Rights, but the ones who wrote those words believed in capital punishment. If one wants to redefine the term for modern times, then he cannot argue from the Bill of Rights itself, because that has the old definition.

c. "Capital punishment doesn't work; it doesn't deter crime."

1) It always deters the offender. Dead people don't commit more crimes.

2) If it lacks in deterrence, it might be because it is not widely exercised or not done speedily enough to be a threat.

3) The principal goal of capital punishment is not deterrence, but punishment. In that way it works every time.

d. "Why not a life sentence?"

1) Confuses a life sentence with a death sentence.

2) It's unjust (doesn't fit the crime) because the criminal only loses liberty, not life.

e. "This kind of death is undignified."



- 1) *In one sense, all death is undignified.*
- 2) *Argues only against certain aggravated forms of capital punishment and not capital punishment itself.*
- 3) *In the final analysis, the question is not the dignity of death, but its equity or justice.*

f. *"There's no opportunity of to reform the criminal." Justice is the goal of punishment, not reform.*

g. *"Capital punishment violates human dignity."*

- 1) *It is specifically because of man's value and dignity that we punish his moral wrongdoing. We don't punish animals for stealing or killing (we don't punish them, we remove them for our safety).*
- 2) *We hold men morally responsible because of dignity.*
- 3) *"It is based on the assumption that normal adult beings are rational and moral beings who knew better, who could have done otherwise, but yet who chose to do evil anyway, and who therefore deserve to be punished." JPM p. 118*
- 4) *Arguably it is undignified to force rehabilitation on free moral agents who don't want it.*

h. *Roman Catholic objections*

- 1) *The Catholic position against capital punishment is somewhat ironic given their position on purgatory, in which even when God forgives a sinner, still he must suffer for his own sins.*
- 2) *What of the practice of penance?*

Quote:

-----3rd, Jews are still God's chosen people. And most under His wrath.

Wrong yet again. God's wrath is equally against those who have rejected Christ's work on the cross.

Quote:

-----  
Lastly, I would say that there is no Scripture that implies that anyone who worships with Roman Catholics cannot possibly be led, or fed, by the Holy Spirit.  
-----

I guess if I worship with Mormons then I can be led, or fed by the Holy Spirit as well. What's the difference, both weaken the Savior by adding works to salvation and changing His deity? The Mormon's change it by claiming that Christ is a created being while the Catholic Church does so by making Mary a deity.

**Re:, on: 2005/9/14 16:09**

My my... how threads do wander...

Krispy

**Re:, on: 2005/9/14 20:05**

Oh my no Krispy friend. Hasn't wandered.

Tex was just giving a concise reply to a post on page 2.

And on a seperate point, lougo gave a very accurate anaylsis of this practice, as being an "inward" form of "meditation".

I had went off line to write a post all about the link, with the description of this practice but when I came to post it ... lougo 's reply was there ... so I decided, he did it well.

The only other point, was that the "group" practice is exactly like the "Alpha course", that leaves the Word up to personal interpretation.

The Holy Spirit works "spontaneously" and not through "practices".

And if we're led by the Spirit, then we'll do exactly as Jesus did.

Nothing He did, while here on earth, centered on "self", nor was it independent of the Father.

He said, "the words that I speak are not mine, but the Father gives them to me" and "the works that I do" etc. etc.

He emptied Himself, and "walked in the spirit" as an "Example" to us, of how we are to walk.

Not by "traditions" , "arts", "practices", or "techniques" (the words from the article) ... but to walk as HE did.

The only part I could see that was near scriptural, was to "pause" a moment to reflect, but by asking the Father for under standing of what we're reading. The "ruminate" part.

In the O.T., it was called "Selah", meaning 'stop and reflect', or as David said, meditate on The Word ... but not through "vain repitions" or "Imaging", etc. that lougo pointed out on page 2.

Having been into New Age and studying it after we got saved ... this practice does incorporate much of that and the Alph a stuff and the main thing is in how "self" seems to be far too much a focus.

I kept thinking, WWJD ?

He just allowed the Father, through The Spirit, lead His every step, action, words, and even prayers. That's our Only Ex ample.

Thanks youse guys.

**Annie, on: 2005/9/14 20:42**

I don't understand, or even heard of an "Alpha Course", nor do I really care.

Half of the things I hear folks slamming or complaining about on this forum, I never even heard of, like "Word of Faith", n or have read Joel Osteen's book, etc etc.....y'know all the minutinae and 'stuff' of christianity...

When I was unsaved, I used to see new age'r's running around this small all too hip and cool canyon of mine.....instinctiv ely I knew they were lost, there was something rather empty sad and sanctimonous about their whole trip...I'm glad your out of that dead-end thingy, it's a bad business that new age.

I really liked that paper that I posted, I didnt see anything like you speak about in that paper, nor do I see anything wrong with using the word , "art" or "practice". I don't see anything unChristlike or unScriptural in that paper on 'lectio divina', in fact, quite the opposite, I saw a really neat rough template of a semi-disciplined way to worship God,

reading, contemplation, meditation, and prayer.

I've done that pretty much instinctively in my secret time with God and the Word, but that paper spelled out everything I was doing already, and the fact that it did, just set me on fire, because that practice was from an early early time in church history, something I believe we in America would do best to think about. And furthermore there are elements in worship from the early church that we should consider, and if they come from the roman church, and they honor the Primacy of Jesus, indeed they are something to consider, and not to be wrapped up in fear, division and hatred.

more and more, I'm understanding why John the Baptist couldn't stand the stench of Jerusalem. It wasn't the sinner he had a problem with, it was the professional and hobby religionists he couldn't abide. Believe me, I'm getting to that point also.

ps. Tex did take the thread into another direction, and respectfully his post wasn't concise, it was a regurgitated cut and paste job from some website trying to justify the unGodly practice of the modern day death penalty. It's no better than abortion.

**Re: Thanks Neil - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/14 21:43**

Neil, thank you for posting this thread. It has given us a chance to wrestle through our own convictions – and ask why we believe the way we do. An incredible memory returned to me – out of this whole thread, and I want to share it:

For years I was a Christian who thought I was saved because I had asked Jesus into my heart. But really I was just another pleaser, and religious conformists, and very critical. I joined in on that religious parade you spoke of. I had a poor sense of worth, and, so I it felt good to put down other religious persuasions. (in those days we Baptists thought we were the best)

Then several years later, I was truly born from above, and given new life in Christ. I saw everything through different eyes. It was like suddenly seeing color for the first time.

I will never forget one day sitting alone in a Catholic Church. In front of me was a life size, true to color crucifix. Suddenly it became almost real. There was my beloved Savior dying for me. I wept and wept. It was a very holy time, there, alone with God. I don't think I could have experienced that depth of worship if it wasn't for a supernatural work of the indwelling Spirit. For years I had been told that the crucifix was evil, and I know that ingrained mindsets don't typically change. (apart from a miracle)

I now believe that God can make dead symbols, rituals, and pictures, liturgies etc come alive with Spiritual reality – but only those who can see, will see. The symbols, of course are not the real thing, but when you've experienced the real, then the symbol has so much more meaning.

It's like looking at a photo, when you know the real thing that it represents.

All that has nothing to do with "lectio divina"

Diane

**Re: Dear Jouko, - posted by jouko (), on: 2005/9/15 6:48**

Annie.

I thank the people that have made me aware about the new age teaching and its practices that are slowly creeping into protestant congregations. Sadly I can now see the same thing happening in one of the largest Finnish congregations here in Australia, all because they've taken onboard teachings that are at best very suspect and at worst totally against the Word.

Neil.

He is risen indeed. Why then use an alternative way? Believe on Him, not a practice.

As for going through a terrible time, we all do that at one time or another. Mine has been going on for some 18 months. You know what, there is a purpose behind this "madness". Personally, I hate it, but then again, I've been all sufficient but

it's all crumbling. May the Lord have mercy on me. Not a lot of help here, but it pains me to see people using a fake when the real deal is available. It feels just like the snake in the Jungle Book when it sings "Trust in me", and the purpose behind that trust is totally false.

With Blessings  
jouko

**Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism, on: 2005/9/15 8:25**

Diane,

Thank you for sharing this. I am interested you received this revelation *after* you had received the Holy Spirit. Something similar also happened to me but I didn't have words for it until I heard a preacher use the analogy of Jesus cleansing the temple.... still the most appropriate for my experience of His grace.

Quote:  
-----It was a very holy time, there, alone with God. I don't think I could have experienced that depth of worship if it wasn't for a supernatural work of the indwelling Spirit. For years I had been told that the crucifix was evil, and I know that ingrained mindsets don't typically change.  
-----

I can identify with this but not through being in a Catholic Church. Over many years, my attitude to the crucifix has changed and I see the value of being faced with the awfulness of the judgement of God upon sin. The empty cross allows one to skip over the difficult part - that I was worthy of death - and hypocrisy beckons. But one's soul is not deceived, really.... one continues to know a lack of peace.

Having said that, I see the individual's search for God has to dig down to the most primitive layer of our being, and until we meet Him there, naked in the blaze of His gaze, we lack.

Within the context of this thread, to comment on Lectio Divina, it strikes me as a reasonable approach to Bible reading and prayer. George Muller discovered the value of reading His Bible as a springboard to meaningful meditation. I would not like to feel the spiritual conflict of going to a place where another spiritual system was in control, which sensed my authority as a challenge. To me, that is not a conducive situation in which to focus on God for a deeper encounter with Him. But, I do recognise God uses who He will use and if the place Neil has discovered is open to God's activity, then it is a safe place to seek and meet with Him.

**Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/15 9:09**

Quote:  
-----I would not like to feel the spiritual conflict of going to a place where another spiritual system was in control,  
-----

This is a legitimate concern. Yet, to be honest, if I applied this, there would be no church that I could go, for everywhere there is a pervasive spirit of worldliness, and other stuff - often going way up into the higher powers that be. And even if it started good, religious organizations have a tendency to drift.

Even my home is ruled by worldly philosophies, and I can do nothing about that. There are forces beyond my control.

Our very world is fallen and under a curse, and really there is no ideal place free from the stain of sin. That is why we must learn to separate ourselves within our own hearts, and never give our hearts to any man - even a good one. We must have good personal boundaries and not allow anyone in that "for-God-only" space.

Then, anywhere we go, no matter who is there, we can worship God.

I thank God that he can lead me out of a corrupt religious system if he chooses. He has done that. But then also he leads me to serve as Music Minister in another place that is far from ideal. I could add a lot more about what God is teaching me through that, but that is another topic.

**Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism, on: 2005/9/15 9:23**

Jouko shared

Quote:  
-----As for going through a terrible time, we all do that at one time or another. Mine has been going on for some 18 months. You know what, there is a purpose behind this "madness". Personally, I hate it, but then again, I've been all sufficient but it's all crumbling.  
-----

My brother, without asking for detail you don't need to share, I want to acknowledge this open-heartedness towards us and ask, are you finding the Lord's help near in this trial?

**Re: Beauty in Roman Catholicism, on: 2005/9/15 9:31**

Diane said

Quote:  
----- to be honest, if I applied this, there would no church that I could go, for everywhere there is a pervasive spirit of worldliness, and of her stuff - often going way up into the higher powers that be.  
-----

This is sadly true and worth remembering.

Quote:  
----- We must have good personal boundaries and not allow anyone in that "for-God-only" space. Then, anywhere we go, no matter who is there, we can worship God.  
-----

Amen. Think of Mme Guyon.

**Re: - posted by jouko (), on: 2005/9/15 20:56**

Dorcas, thanks, and a short answer to your question, yes. I do hope you believe me that I'm not after any pity etc. Neil begun with saying that his trial is coming along and he needed to be closer to the Lord. He has got the right attitude in time of trials, but it should also be like that in other times. Trials are there to make us stronger but that won't happen until the at good old self takes a beating. Catherine Marshall wrote in one of her books about a retreat where the participants decided that they wanted to forget self and be more Christ like. Well, the Lord obliged and pain followed but oh what a relief when you're not in "charge" anymore. The Lord has been gentle with me although circumstances have changed drastically over this time of 18 months. You are a good bunch of people, diverse in thought and doings. Finally to Neil, may the Lord be with you in anything you decide to do.

Blessings  
jouko

**Re:, on: 2005/9/15 23:45**

I thought by my very first post on here, that my friend Neil would see I meant him no "harm" whatsoever ... quite the contrary.

But be it as it is ... to the posts that followed since, I can only be frank and honest before all.

If you want to discuss "EXPERIENCES", I could write a book... that starts with visions as a child, and then a year by year account of the 50 something years since .... but that is NOT what I base ANY of my Christianity on, nor my beliefs nor my 'practices'.

All I'm hearing is "feelings", "experiences", and "how I felt", etc. when the God Himself had said, "They who worship me, must do so in Spirit and in **Truth**."

If our experiences or 'feelings' were not derived from places that "Contain Truth" and His unadulterated Truth, then Biblically, they count for naught.

I'm sorry. My heart is not set to heart even so much as a small bug, nonetheless flesh and blood humans, and the Body of Christ, at that.

I'd have your blood on my hands, if my intent was such.

I truly do love each one here, but I can't prove that, no more than I can "prove the intents of my own heart" to any. I just know the Love I feel for each and how I pray and think of each when I go off line, and I'll just leave it at that.

I'm sorry if I brought offense Neil, etc.  
With sorrow.  
Annie

**Re: no harm, Annie., on: 2005/9/16 0:25**

I can only be honest and frank also.

Thanks be to God's mercy that I don't have the weight of the Protestant around my neck, so therefore I'm not as fearful or wary as some who have that spiritual DNA embedded within their souls and hearts. What I mean, that need to constantly speak out against the roman church, I don't feel that need, in fact, quite the opposite, the Lord has placed it upon my heart and my witness to NOT speak out against the roman church, He, my Father will deal with the anti-Christ spirit that's both inside and outside the Church of Jesus Christ.

God will repay.

I saw within the 'lectio divina', a really neat, really beautiful way, to worship God, to pray over the Word, the Living Bread. That's all.

Most people who posted in response reacted with fear and loathing, I hope they engage in private self-examination as to why they reacted in such a way. Within that paper was nothing other than a focus on Jesus, and on the Word of God.

I'm done with my 'fast' from the forum, coz the Lord gave me a blessedly annointed compilation called "A Kingdom of Priests" which I just finished.

I love you Annie, and pray with my whole heart our Father bless you so sweetly in Jesus' Name.

Neil