

“Yoga: Peaceful Practice or Dangerous Deception?”

Sharing from 22 years as a Former Yoga Enthusiast and Yoga Instructor



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<http://PraiseMoves.com> and <http://5StepsGuide.com>

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Who is Lorette Willis?

Lorette Willis is the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry at <http://PraiseMoves.com>. She has helped thousands of people lose weight, regain health and become “Fit Witnesses for Christ in spirit, soul and body.”

A Keynote Speaker and Author with Harvest House Publishers and Destiny Image, Lorette has spoken internationally and has produced fitness DVDs, books, and TV shows, as well as trained hundreds of Certified PraiseMoves Instructors on 6 continents. PraiseMoves is “The Christian Alternative to Yoga.” She also offers MIRA! (“Christian Fitness with a Latin Beat” some are calling “the alternative to Zumba!”). Additionally, Lorette is a Certified Health Coach with a Biblical Perspective.



With Lorette Willis,
Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry

“5 Simple Steps to Looking & Feeling Fabulous 2.0”

Be sure to pick up Lorette’s New

FREE GUIDE, AUDIO & VIDEO COURSE AT
<http://5StepsGuide.com>



Questions about yoga, so-called “Christian yoga” and the PraiseMoves difference? Check out her article, “Why a Christian ALTERNATIVE to yoga?” at: <http://PraiseMoves.com>

Find out about becoming a Certified PraiseMoves Instructor – online and live trainings. There are now over 200 CPIs around the world!



#1. What IS Yoga? Isn't it "just exercise"?

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, yoga (coming from an east Indian Sanskrit word which means "union with god" or "to yoke") is

"a mystic and ascetic Hindu discipline for achieving union with the supreme spirit through meditation, prescribed postures, controlled breathing, etc."

Question: Does that sound like "Salvation by works"?

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines yoga this way: "Hindu theistic philosophy teaching the suppression of all activity of body, mind, and will in order that the ***self may realize its distinction from them and attain liberation.***"

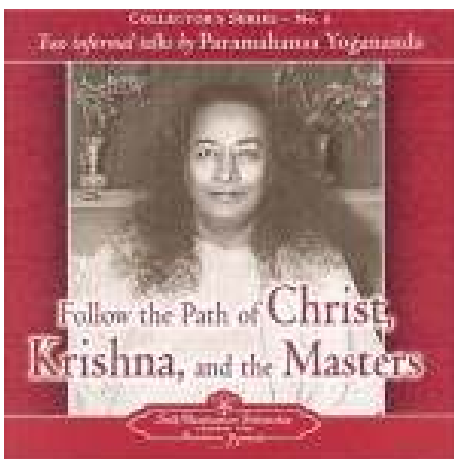
(At right) Swami Vivekananda "Indian priest and mystic" who first introduced yoga to the West at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago.

He has been called "**Hinduism's greatest modern missionary**" by Swami Palani in Hinduism Today.



"Yoga is the missionary arm of Hinduism and the New Age movement."

– Laurette Willis, PraiseMoves.com



Another Hindu missionary welcomed into elite circles was Paramhansa Yogananda who started the Self-Realization Fellowship in Los Angeles.

Yogananda cleverly chose to demonstrate that yoga was completely compatible with Christianity. Wearing a cross, he came to America in the 1920s with the Hindu religious text, the Bhagavad Gita, in one hand and the Bible in the other.

Yogananda said that yoga was the binding force that could connect all religions.

Question: Can yoga be a bridge or “binding force” between Christianity (a personal relationship with Jesus Christ) and a religion (such as Hinduism or Buddhism)?



According to Hindus

Quoted in Hinduism Today At left, Professor Subhas Tiwari of Hindu University of America.

*“The simple, immutable fact is that yoga originated from the Vedic or Hindu culture. Its techniques were not adopted by Hinduism, but originated from it... **The effort to separate yoga from Hinduism must be challenged because it runs counter to the fundamental principles upon which yoga itself is premised...**”*

“Efforts to separate yoga from its spiritual center reveal ignorance of the goal of yoga.” (HinduismToday.com – 9/1-3/09).

2. Offerings to idols?

- Yoga poses are “offerings to the 330 million Hindu gods”
- Acts 15:29 tells us to “*abstain from things offered to idols.*”

Question: Do you see a “twisting” of Romans 12:1 here? (“Present your bodies a living sacrifice...”)



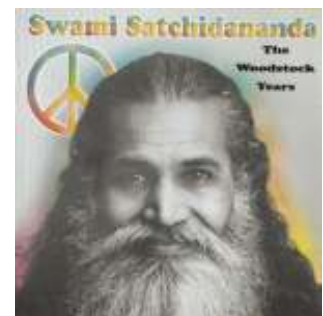
3. Can Christians do Yoga – just for exercise?

Sannyasin Arumugaswami, managing editor of Hinduism Today said that Hinduism is the soul of Yoga.

“A Christian trying to adapt these practices will likely disrupt their own Christian beliefs.”

Laurette says:

I was “blessed” by famed yogi Swami Satchidananda at the Ananda Ashram in upstate New York when I was ten years old—less than three years after my mother and I began yoga “just for exercise.” My mother became a Hatha yoga instructor, and later so did I – along with 22 years in the New Age movement.



In an article entitled “An Open Letter to Evangelicals” from the January 1991 issue of *Hinduism Today*, Swami Sivasiva Palani wrote:

*“A small army of **yoga missionaries** – hatha, raja, siddha and kundalini – beautifully trained in the last 10 years, is about to set upon the western world. They may not call themselves Hindu, but Hindus know where yoga came from and where it goes.”*

Swami Palani goes on to write:

*“We hope this proves useful to you. I close with a quote from Swami Vivekananda, **Hinduism’s greatest modern missionary**, spoken in January of 1895, ‘What I now want is a band of fiery missionaries.’ It’s a hundred years late. But it appears he’s going to get his wish.”*



Are You a Yogi?

In the West, the term “yogi” is used to refer to anyone who practices yoga.

However, in the Bhagavad-Gita, the god Krishna says that the true yogi is one who has surrendered himself “fully unto me.”

There IS a “Lord of Yoga”

This “Lord of Yoga” is also known as “Shiva, The Destroyer” and “The god of Death” (at right).

Who is Shiva?

While Hinduism recognizes 330 million gods, the trinity of chief Hindu gods includes Brahma (creator), Vishnu (preserver) and Shiva (destroyer).



According to Webster’s, Shiva is the Hindu god of destruction and rebirth. Shiva is Lord of Yoga (Yogeshwara) – according to Bhagavad-Gita, and the first Hatha Yoga teacher – according to the Hatha Yoga Pradipika (HYP), the classic text for Hatha yoga (the type of yoga taught in fitness centers and many churches).

Question: Do you think spiritual influences can have an effect on someone – even if they don't believe it?

- Have you ever been influenced to do or say something contrary to what you would normally do? Why is that?
- Are there influences or spiritual forces beyond what we can see physically?
- Can you think of examples in music, media or elsewhere?

4. What is “New Age” or the New Age Movement?

New Age is a combination of a number of religions and has as its foundation pantheism (the doctrine that all forces, manifestations, etc. of the universe are God; also, the worship of all gods) and astrology (the belief that the positions of the sun, moon, stars and planets guide or affect human affairs, and can foretell the future).

New Age is HUGE in Western culture, especially in the U.S. and Canada. Yoga is one of the primary entry points into New Age thought and culture.

5. How about “Christian Yoga”? That’ okay, isn’t it?



“Christian yoga is an oxymoron.” –Laurette Willis, TIME Magazine, Sept. 2005

Interestingly, the “Father of Christian Yoga” was Hindu! A.K. Mozumdar (1864-1953). He wrote books on “Christian Yoga Metaphysics” and was the founder of the Christian Yoga Society.

He wrote: “If man thinks and acts, is not the thinker and actor God? If God is all life, then all lives are God. The creative power is the very nature of the being of the Creator; hence the creative power is God. Life is the Creator, and will never be reduced to the level of its own creation. This knowledge sets a man free.”

BUT WAIT A MINUTE!!!

Proponents of today’s “Christian yoga” are not followers of A.K. Mozumdar!

Most likely that’s true. However, consider the intent of Mozumdar calling his book, magazine and practice “Christian yoga.” He was named the “Father of Christian Yoga,” and the Founder of the “Christian Yoga Society.” And he was Hindu! **CONFUSING?!!!**

Question: In Acts 16, why did the apostle Paul finally tire of the bewitched woman who was *proclaiming what many would say was the truth about them?*

“But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, ‘I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.’ And he came out that very hour” (Acts 16:18).

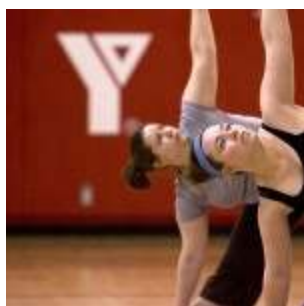
Question: If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, would YOU want a devout Hindu, or a New Ager, or secular humanist, share “the truth” to YOUR children?

Christian Counselor ties Yoga with “Chaos & Confusion”

“I’ve noticed a consistent pattern in my clients who are Christians and are involved in yoga, whether it is ‘regular yoga’ or ‘christian yoga’...their lives are marked with chaos and confusion.” - Celeste Davis, The Wellness Workshop www.TheWellnessWorkshop.org



6. Am I My Brother-or-Sister’s Keeper?



To strong Christians (strong in their relationship with the Lord as well as the strong-willed, strong-minded ones) I say:

Certainly, you may not be adversely affected by the subtle seeds of doubt and New Age thought planted in yoga classes. You may even be going to a yoga class that is devoid of much of the New Age lingo and Hindu phraseology.

However, would you agree there are people in your life you influence?

Do you think there may be some unbelievers and new believers watching you? A young follower may not have your discernment. She may be like my mother and I were – weak and unskilled in the Word of God and open to the deceptions of the enemy.

Do you think she could perhaps wind up in the New Age movement as I did if she began following yoga because you seemed to think it was “just exercise”?

Question: Are we responsible for living our lives in such a way as to be a help or a hindrance to the cause of Christ? And what about Yoga in Schools – is that okay?

7. What is PraiseMoves?

PraiseMoves is "The Christian ALTERNATIVE to yoga."

PraiseMoves certainly isn't for everyone, but stretching exercises are! Find a good book on stretching and flexibility. Look for videos that are purely about stretching the body – not the mind and spirit.

The believer's walk is one of renewing the mind on the Word of God (Romans 12:2), as we do in PraiseMoves, not emptying it – a practice common in yogic meditation.



No, you don't have to do PraiseMoves – but why not consider a stretching and flexibility class instead of yoga? If still unsure, please pray and ask the Lord about it.

"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God" 1 John 3:21.

PraiseMoves foundation scripture is 1 Corinthians 6:20, ***"For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."***

People who have been looking for a safe alternative to yoga have told me PraiseMoves is answered prayer. I also believe it can be a "witty invention" to win the lost.

The Real Foundation of PraiseMoves (it's not exercise!)

What?! Isn't this all about the stretching postures? No. The foundation of PraiseMoves is neither exercise nor the stretching postures.

The FOUNDATION of PraiseMoves is the Word of God we speak aloud or meditate upon while doing PraiseMoves postures.

The healthful stretching postures are merely a "witty invention" to get us more *into* the Word of God – and to get more of the Word of God into us!



Each posture is ascribed a scripture (and there are over 140 PraiseMoves postures – including Hebrew letter postures!). At right is The Flapping Tent *"The Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life"* (Job 33:4).

See <http://PraiseMoves.com> Join Us @ <http://facebook.com/PraiseMovesFan>