

Christ in Prophecy

Religions 9: “Matrisciana on Christian Yoga”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: More and more churches are offering course in what they call Christian yoga. Is there really such a thing as Christian yoga? Or have some sincere Christians been sincerely deceived? And how did a feature of a pagan Eastern Religion get mixed in with Christianity in the first place? For some insights into these questions stay tuned for an interview with a world-class expert on yoga.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our blessed hope and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. Once again this week my colleague Nathan Jones and I are delighted to have as our special guest one of Christendom’s foremost experts on Eastern Religions like Hinduism and Buddhism. Our guest is Caryl Matrisciana a writer and video producer from California. Caryl welcome back to Christ in Prophecy.

Caryl Matrisciana: Thank you very much for having me.

Dr. Reagan: We are delighted to have you and I tell you Caryl that program we did last week was a real blockbuster I still feel tingling all over from your testimony about how you went to place looking for drugs and found Jesus Christ.

Caryl Matrisciana: Incredible story.

Dr. Reagan: In fact Nathan why don’t you tell our viewers how they can view that program on our website?

Nathan Jones: Sure, our website has many of the Christ in Prophecy episodes, just click multimedia and television our programs are there including the ones with Caryl. During the week

of broadcast we'll actually have it on every page of the website just click the button and you can watch it right on-line.

Dr. Reagan: Well Nathan how about kicking off our discussion today.

Nathan Jones: Sure. We are talking about yoga and you are an expert, can you tell us why you are an expert on yoga?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well, Nathan I was actually born and raised in India for the first 20 years of my life so I saw the practice of yoga, I wasn't involved in it because I realized that it was Hinduism. I mean in fact in Hindu teaching it is known that there is no yoga without Hinduism there is no Hinduism without yoga.

Nathan Jones: Interesting.

Caryl Matrisciana: The two cannot be separated; it can not be separated into spiritual exercise because the very point of yoga which was designed in the Bhagavad Gita which is the Hindu writings, the Hindu holy scriptures they call it the Bhagavad Gita the actual god the deity in there designed yoga for the individual to connect to his god consciousness. In Hinduism they don't believe that you are a sinner they believe that you are ignorant of your divinity so the spark within you has to be ignited through yoga discipline. And in fact another interesting thing is that it is believed that there is a lying, a coiled serpent asleep in each person waiting to be awakened through yoga disciplines. The serpent is known as wisdom, power, knowledge and if that is brought up through the chakras which are energy psychic centers they call them, it is metaphysics it's not true, it is not scientific, certainly not biblical. But the snake is brought up through self-hypnosis, through going within oneself through breathing, through waking it up through disciplines, repetitive saying the names of the deities again and again through repetitive things called mantras, repetitive prayer. Through breathing pushing it up 'til eventually it comes to the third eye, the sixth chakra and then comes into the mind into consciousness where you realize that your divinity and you connect.

Nathan Jones: Your divinity?

Caryl Matrisciana: That you are divinity because within Hinduism it is understood that divinity is in everything, god is in everything, everything is divine whether it is the rat on the street, the cow in the street, the monkeys in the trees, you. In fact before every yoga class you say, "Namaste," that means in Hindi, "the god within me bows to the god within you," so that is all an

integral part of the spiritual discipline of yoga. And Brahman is understood to be a god consciousness, not a person. So when you say that you become god in the Western world we see god the God of the Bible the Creator God is a person and Jesus Christ His Son and the Holy Spirit, three persons in one the triune God. That is not the case in Hinduism, in Hinduism it is a consciousness, it's a force, it's a thinking that you need to connect into. So in fact you need to alter your worldview.

Dr. Reagan: Did you ever become a practitioner of yoga?

Caryl Matrisciana: Yes, I did.

Dr. Reagan: So you have experienced it first hand, not just observing it.

Caryl Matrisciana: No, as I grew up in India I observed it being practiced, but in when I was about 19, 20 my parents returned to England. I got involved in the New Age which I didn't realize was a religious mechanism to change our worldview into an Eastern mystical worldview. So the New Age that I saw in the West was a completely polished, cleaned up appealing, manipulative enticement into a different worldview.

Dr. Reagan: Did the yoga work in the sense that it really can bring you into an altered state of consciousness?

Caryl Matrisciana: Oh, absolutely, it is a powerful spiritualism.

Dr. Reagan: What's wrong with going into an altered state of consciousness?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well you first of all you give up your mind, but you don't realize you are giving up your mind. And the first commandment says that we need to, love the Lord our God with all our heart and our mind. We are not allowed to put our mind into neutral within the Biblical mandate. In fact David talks about, "that I meditate on your law day and night," the Lord tells us, "to bind His law on our heads." So it's a mental rumination of meditating on the Word which is quite different in the practice of yoga where you meditate on an experience so you go into yourself and you imagine and you have subjective emotions about what you feel and it is very, very powerful.

Dr. Reagan: Wouldn't this open you up to demon possession, or at least demonic attack?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well I didn't know at the time because I wasn't a Bible believing Christian that what I was getting involved in was opening doorways into the occult, opening doorways into demons.

Nathan Jones: Is that what that snake is? Is that a demonic spirit?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well the snake is the master of all demonic spirits. It was the snake in Ezekiel and Isaiah and the stories we are told there where he says, "I will be like the most high," he acknowledges that there is a most high. So it's a serpent.

Dr. Reagan: Good point.

Caryl Matrisciana: Lucifer the snake knows there is a monotheistic God, but I will be like the most high is that he introduces polytheism; many gods, the idea that we can all be like gods. And why not, because in the Bible we're told that we are children of God, but and we are also told that we are created in His image, but we are not children of God until we come through Jesus Christ through repentance. So what this is, is it is a counterfeit way through of experiencing, through creative manipulation which is what Satan did, he was a liar he said, "I will be like the most High." He created in his imagination a reality that doesn't exist. He can not be the Most High.

Dr. Reagan: Now Caryl a few years ago you went back to India and you produced a major documentary on yoga called, *Yoga Uncoiled*, is that correct?

Caryl Matrisciana: Yes.

Dr. Reagan: And tell us about your experience there in India.

Caryl Matrisciana: Well the reason I went was because Christians today are practicing yoga and it is being called Christianized yoga. It can't, there is no such thing, it is like saying Christianized Hinduism. It is like saying Christianized Occultism.

Dr. Reagan: Yeah, I want to get into that in a moment. I want you to tell us right now what did you do in India?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well I went to interview Yogis; those are the practitioners of yoga to say, "Can the spiritual discipline, the spiritual connections of yoga be separated from the physical exercises?" Because in America everybody is saying that they are just involved in yoga which they called it: flexing, and stretching.

Dr. Reagan: Were they willing to be interviewed?

Caryl Matrisciana: Oh, yes. In the movie you see in, *Yoga Uncoiled*, I interview not only the Yogis in India those are the Yoga teachers in India and actually filmed classes going on, and people that can explain what yoga means in India. But I also then interviewed a Christian who teaches yoga, she is a pastor in her church who teaches yoga.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, this is fascinating. I tell you what I want to do, I want to pause right now and show a clip from that documentary called, *Yoga Uncoiled*.

Video: Today in the West about 35 million Americans are into yoga, just seeing yoga as a physical fitness. Yoga is a Hindu word; yoga is a Hindu discipline to become one with the universal consciousness; which means to become one with god. Which god? Brahman, the Hindu god. There are many various paths to your god, in the sacred text of Hinduism called Bhagavad Gita indicates 3 different paths first of all. Bhakti Veda is a focus on a deity, then Gyana Yoga is a focus on wisdom, then the Karma Yoga is based on your good deeds and actions.

You have a number of yogas, yoga is not one entity but it has a wide variety of yogas. So each yoga has a physical aspect and a spiritual aspect. The physical aspect is controlling the physical body. They control the breathing, they control the mind thinking activity, they control the physical movements and the timely behavior to discipline the body in the morning, night, how to control the bowel movements. These are all the forms of the physical part of yoga.

If you are practicing Gyana Yoga or should I say Arsha Yoga the primary focus of that technique is to bring the mind to perfect stillness, and to focus the mind in a very deliberate way on a particular sound or vibration or image as it maybe. And in Tibetan Mahayana tradition of Buddhism that brings the mind into a state of quiescence, peace such that revelation can occur, spiritual penetration of a higher truth, another truth. So it is a way of manipulating the mind to generate different experiences or insights of cognitions that are supposed to be connected to the apprehension, spiritual apprehension of high realities.

According to Hinduism the highest reality is to become aware of one's own divinity. Hinduism respects everything as deity; the cows on the street, the monkeys in the city, the idols which are half men half animal like creatures. But the highest goal is realization of one's personal divinity or god consciousness. This realization can be experienced through direct perception deep within one's own mind, a place known as the seat of concentrated wisdom, an area between the

eyebrows which is known as the third eye. It is also called the sixth chakra meaning wheel and recognized as psychic energy. The other chakras are said to run along the spine starting at the bottom, blossoming at the top, meeting at the agna meaning command. Here at the agna the third eye is the central point where all experience is gathered in total concentration and is also believed to be the base of all creation itself.

In this hotel where I was staying each morning the local priests would come to offer the morning puja or prayer rituals to the gods. He'd prepare aarti the celebration of light through fire and mix the vermilion red mixture for bindi or kumkum the dots seen between the eyebrows. This bindi or kumkum is believed to retain psychic energy in the human body and control the various levels of concentration. Here the hotel manager explains that the bindi or kumkum and aarti fire are being prepared not only for the gods but also the hotel guest who are esteemed as gods.

For our gods we place this kumkum as a tradition. Okay, the guests are our god. Okay, the guest who are coming in here are our gods. Okay so we keep the bindi we do the aarti and the bindi for the guests. They are like our gods.

In Hinduism they have more than 330 million gods that means that everything is god. Whatever you see, whatever you touch is god, and the sun god, the moon god, and all everything is god, so man and nature, man and animal are one.

Part 2

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our interview with Caryl Matrisciana the producer of the video, *Yoga Uncoiled*.

Dr. Reagan: Caryl I want to get into our discussion in this segment by reading you a statement that was made recently by Albert Mohler who is the President of Southern Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He spoke out about the practice of yoga and he generated a storm of controversy as you know.

Caryl Matrisciana: Yeah, I can imagine.

Dr. Reagan: This is very controversial. And he said this, "The idea that the body is a vehicle for reaching consciousness with the divine is not Christianity. Christians who practice yoga must

either deny the reality of what yoga represents or fail to see the contradictions between their Christian commitments and their embrace of yoga.” What is your response?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well their embrace of Eastern Mysticism that is exactly what it is, because yoga was specifically designed for a purpose within Eastern Mysticism. One to awaken the idea that we are divine and that divinity is within us and we are one with everything. The second is to shorten our reincarnation cycle to prepare us for our reincarnation cycle.

Dr. Reagan: That is the purpose of yoga.

Caryl Matrisciana: The purpose of yoga is to teach you how to die in order that you can come back in your next life as a better person.

Nathan Jones: It’s suicide?

Caryl Matrisciana: It’s suicide.

Nathan Jones: Yoga is suicide?

Caryl Matrisciana: It is a discipline to prepare you for death, within the context of Hinduism which believes that your spirit that you don’t die that you come back again and again and again. In fact Gandhi said that, “reincarnation is a hopeless cycle of imprisonment.” The Hindu knows they cannot get out of reincarnation that they are going to be born again, die again, born again, die again. So why, my question would be to a Bible believing Christian that understands that Jesus Christ died because we were separated from Him through our sins. He died in order to give us reconciliation with life, for eternity. We’ve got reconciliation through Jesus Christ. Why practice a discipline designed for death?

Dr. Reagan: So basically what you are saying is that the term Christian yoga is an oxymoron.

Caryl Matrisciana: Well like a lot of things in the new emerging Christianity that is exactly what it is. It is Christianized occultism, Christianized Hinduism. In fact in my movie, “Yoga Uncoiled,” the Hindu’s are very angry with Christians that try and steal their religion and Christianize it. And yet Christians will say, “Well I can separate it. I can actually do, I only do the spiritual exercises. But let’s question that; I play tennis, I don’t play Christian tennis. We do exercises for our body and we can do gymnastics and flex and stretch that’s called gymnastics. The moment you call it yoga, yoga means to yolk, to unite with god consciousness. Many of the positions used within yoga are the names of the deities, those positions are called asana and

those positions are a deity that you become and you merge with within an Eastern worldview. So if they want to do stretching and flexing which I do every time before I play tennis. I think about the muscle I am pulling, I think about the muscle I am stretching, I think about the position I am going in order to you know to do the appropriate stretching. I don't think of a cobra which is one of the positions in yoga.

Nathan Jones: Is it that third finger thing where they sit like that?

Caryl Matrisciana: You know what? You shouldn't do a mudra like that.

Nathan Jones: Well tell me why? Why shouldn't I do that?

Caryl Matrisciana: Because that is believed to be part of the prayer that you pull in the vibrations, you hold your hand in a particular way and you say that word aum which is a vibration of a god, because everything is god consciousness our positions, our repetitive prayers which are called mantras. You say the name of the deity and they believe that the vibrations, saying "aum" connects you to the vibration that began the world. You see the basis of yoga is evolution. And evolution is the faith of Hinduism, that everything is becoming better. If you are a Bible believing Christian you understand that nothing is getting better. We are on a decline we are getting worse, they are 2 opposing worldviews. Yoga is designed to make you feel better because they believe it is encouraging the divinity within you to realize that your god consciousness. Actually you are getting involved in a lie, its deception. Why not just do good physical exercises, and Paul said that it profits our body a little bit to do a little bit of physical discipline, that's fine. But then why don't we meditate on incredible things that God has done for us, which is what it is all about, on the promises of God. And not put your mind into a vacuum into an experience of wanting to make yourself feel better so that you can come into the presence of God. Now when I was a Roman Catholic we practiced the presence of God, that is when you go into a Roman Catholic Church and the red light is burning on the alter that is to tell you that the Eucharist; the piece of bread there has been made into the actual body of Jesus Christ. And so when you come into the church and make the sign of the cross you are practicing the presence, you are walking in a mystical worldview with your mind and reason telling you that that piece of bread is actually Jesus that is going to be crucified or died again during mass, or his being left over from mass and is up there. So in a mystical way I feel the presence of Jesus. When I became a Bible believing Christian I had to toss that out, I had to repent of those feelings and now rely on the promise which says that Jesus will never leave me. It is a completely different walk of faith, versus experience experiencing through subjectivity. Now I

may not feel like I am in the presence of Jesus when I walk by faith, but Jesus said He would never leave me. He will never leave me alone. He is my comforter. He is the lifter of my head. He is my boardwalk. He is my sustainer. He's my sufficiency. Those are the promises that I have to depend on in faith.

Dr. Reagan: Well Christian meditation never consists of emptying your mind to become a vacuum. It would be meditating on Scripture, reading Scripture and thinking about Scripture.

Caryl Matrisciana: And the character of God.

Dr. Reagan: Yes, absolutely.

Nathan Jones: David said that quite a lot, meditate on God's Word day and night, but not the meditation that yoga is teaching, right.

Caryl Matrisciana: Well no it is the meditation on the character of God. How good you have been to me God. How merciful you are to me. Thank you for dying to give me eternal life. Thank you I am a worm, I've been separated from you by sin. Whereas in Hinduism you are not considered a worm, you are considered divinity, divine you've got to waken it and you mustn't have a low self-esteem of yourself within Hinduism and Eastern Mysticism. You just have to go to India to see this doesn't work. In India there is huge poverty, huge...

Dr. Reagan: Mass starvation.

Caryl Matrisciana: ... depression. If yoga worked in India these people would be elated, they're not.

That's right.

Part 3

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to our interview of Caryl Matrisciana. We have been talking about the danger of any Christian practicing the Hindu technique of yoga. Caryl let's close up our show. Could you show us the significant differences between Christianity and Eastern religions?

Caryl Matrisciana: Well in Eastern Mysticism there is no such thing as sin, it's your ignorance that you are divine. See in biblical Christianity the whole concept of having a relationship with

Jesus Christ is based on me being a sinner. But God loved me so much He didn't want me separated from Him for all eternity, He sent His only begotten Son so that through Him my sins might be forgiven and I can be reconciled back to Him. In Hinduism the only reconciliation if you will is because they see death as a hopeless cycle of imprisonment, so the only reconciliation is for you to come back better the next time round through the practice and discipline of yoga. So you can somehow be a better sinner, I hate to say it like that, but within Biblical Christianity we believe that your sin is a sin, you're a sinner. In Hinduism they think you can be a better person.

Nathan Jones: With what the guru being the most holy, or the most sinless of their group?

Caryl Matrisciana: Not really the guru is a god-man. The guru has connected with his enlightenment, that he is god and he wants all his devotees to connect to their divinity and realize that they are god because that way they can then control their death their destiny. Well there is no such thing, we can't control our destiny. But you see we have to come back to the serpent who is the initiator of Hinduism. The serpent told Eve, "Surely you won't die." The Hindu's idea of reincarnation is surely you won't die. So it is the procrastination of death that I can come back better in my next life, in my next life. So I think that is a huge difference there in Eastern Mysticism you are connecting to a god force. With us through Biblical Christianity we connect, we are reconciled to God through Jesus Christ which is a personal relationship, a person. Hinduism doesn't believe that there is any such person out there, it is a universal god in everything, everything is divine concept.

Nathan Jones: Pull you up by your own boot-strap and save yourself basically.

Caryl Matrisciana: Yes, yes.

Nathan Jones: While in Christianity we need a Savior to save us because we can't.

Caryl Matrisciana: That is the primary difference, and that death has been concurred for us. In Hinduism it hasn't been it is on-going, it is reincarnation. And I think another thing when Christians get involved they say, oh I've heard lots of people say to me, "Well I only did it once and then I didn't feel right." The reason they didn't feel right is because they opened themselves up to demonic spirits. That must be confessed in order for a Christian to have a life relationship of fellowship back with the Lord, go to 1 John 1:9 which says, "If we confess our sins then He who is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sin will cleanse us of all unrighteousness." Go to the Lord, say, "Lord, I've sinned I got involved in something that I was ignorantly involved in. I didn't realize I was opening myself up to demonic spirits. I confess my sin Lord Jesus." At that

point you are forgiven you are back in fellowship, but if you allow those demons to come in within Hinduism those demons become our familiar spirits, they are familiar. We are Christians we say, "Well I didn't really sin, I didn't really do that bad." That is a familiar, you either sinned or you didn't. You are either pregnant or you're not, you know that's it. So we have to come back to the fact that to realize I am a sinner, yes I tangled with the occult world, it's like well I kind of sort of played with Ouija Boards but I didn't really do it.

Dr. Reagan: Sort of, kind of played with it.

Caryl Matrisciana: You don't know you became involved in a vehicle that takes you into a demonic world where they want to possess you. So you have to come out as a Christian, whether you have practiced it once or for years and years or years it doesn't matter, it's according to the Bible we have to call evil, evil and good, good.

Dr. Reagan: Caryl I hate to say it but our time is almost up, and I want people to find out more about your ministry and I know one way they can do that is to get on your newsletter mailing list where you discuss all these issues, it is free of charge. How about telling our viewers how they can do that.

Caryl Matrisciana: Well they can go onto my web page, www.caryl.com, my name is spelled a little differently C-A-R-Y-L-T-V.com, 7 letters, C-A-R-Y-L-T-V.com and there they can preview many of the 60 movies we have produced.

Dr. Reagan: Great.

Caryl Matrisciana: And get the book.

Dr. Reagan: Well thank you Caryl and I tell you it has been so exciting to talk with you that we are going to invite you back for a third week and kind of shift things a little bit.

Caryl Matrisciana: Well good.

Dr. Reagan: We are going to talk about the impact of Eastern religion upon Christianity in America particularly in the apostate Emergent Church Movement which has been heavily impacted by Hindu type thinking. And I know you are making a major video production on that right now which is called what?

Caryl Matrisciana: *Wide is the Gate.*

Dr. Reagan: *Wide is the Gate*, and so we will have you come back next week to discuss that with us and we look forward to that. Well folks that is our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you I am sure it has, and I hope you will be back with us next week when Caryl Matrisciana will discuss the dangers of the Emergent Church movement. Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries' saying, "Look up, be watchful for our redemption is drawing near."

End of Program