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Chapter 1 : Talk:Christianity and Buddhism/Old version - Wikipedia

*Christians Talk about Buddhist Meditation, Buddhists Talk About Christian Prayer [Rita M. Gross, Terry Muck] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This book adopts the format of the editors' previous book, Buddhists Talk about Jesus, Christians Talk about the Buddha.*

I am a Buddhist. Why should I consider becoming a Christian? Compared with Buddhism, Christianity has several distinguishing features that show that it deserves consideration. First, while both Christianity and Buddhism have an historical central figure, namely Jesus and Buddha, only Jesus is shown to have risen from the dead. Many people in history have been wise teachers. Many have started religious movements. Siddhartha Guatama, the historical Buddha also called Sakyamuni, stands out among them for having special wisdom and a profound philosophy of life. But Jesus also stands out, and He has confirmed His spiritual teachings with a test that only divine power could pass. Jesus deserves special consideration. Second, the Christian Scriptures are historically outstanding, deserving serious consideration. One could even say that the history of the Bible is so compelling that to doubt the Bible is to doubt history itself since the Bible is the most historically verifiable book of all antiquity. The multiplicity of manuscripts allows for a tremendous research base by which we can test the texts against each other and identify what the originals said. All of the originals were written within the time of the contemporaries eyewitnesses, in the first century A. Whole book copies surface by A. Having all the books of the New Testament initially written within the times of eyewitnesses means that the books did not have time to devolve into myth and folklore. Plus, their truth claims were held accountable by members of the Church who, as personal witnesses to the events, could check the facts. Robinson in *Honest to God* reports that the New Testament documents are Bruce Metzger, an expert in the Greek New Testament, suggests a more modest Third, Christian ethics has a stronger foundation than Buddhist ethics. Christian ethics is founded in the personal character of God. God is personal and moral. His nature is good, and therefore all actions which align with His goodness are actually good. Whatever departs from His goodness is actually evil. For Buddhists, however, ultimate reality is not understood as personal. But morality by its very nature requires personality. To illustrate, consider the morality of a rock. One does not blame a rock for being used in a murder since it is not a person with moral duties. Rather, the moral duty lies with the person who used that rock for evil purposes. Buddhism lacks the personal framework for moral duty. With Buddhism, karma is the framework for morality. But karma is impersonal. It is akin to a law of nature. Breaking a karmic "rule" is not intrinsically evil. There seems to be no significant difference between error non-moral mistakes and sin moral wrongdoing. Furthermore, many Buddhists even assert that the dualities of "good" and "evil" ultimately break down. The categories of morality are not grand enough to map onto ultimate reality, and enlightened individuals will see that good and evil blur into one. But such a position means that ultimate reality would not be "good. And what grounds would there be for living a morally good life as opposed to an amoral life without regard for moral distinctions, or an inactive life avoiding moral choices as much as possible? If Buddhism asserts that reality is not ultimately personal and the distinctions between good and evil are not actually real, then Buddhism does not have a true foundation for ethics. Christianity, on the other hand, can point to the character of God as personally founding morality and providing a basis to distinguish good from evil. Fourth, Christianity rightly appreciates "desire. Sakyamuni taught that tanha, "desire" or "attachment," is the root of suffering and is to be dissolved. But some admittedly good things are based on the idea of desire. Love, for example, is "to desire the good of another" John In contrast, Christianity teaches that desire is good when it is properly directed. Paul urges Christians to "desire the greater gifts" of the Spirit 1 Corinthians In the Psalms, we see pictures of worshipers longing for and desiring fellowship with God Psalm And, of course, God does not simply act loving, He is love 1 John 4: Sacrificing desire altogether seems to throw out the proverbial baby love with the dirty bathwater suffering. Fifth is the question "What do you do with your sin? Sin is sometimes understood as ignorance. It is sinful if one does not see or understanding

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reality as Buddhism defines it. However, in Buddhism, there is still an idea of moral error termed "sin. But, this latter definition of sin points to a kind of moral error that requires real atonement. From where can atonement rise? Can atonement come by adherence to karmic principles? Karma is impersonal and amoral. One could do good works to even the balance, but one cannot ever dispose of sin. Karma does not even provide a context whereby moral error is even moral. Whom have we offended if we sin in private? Karma does not care one way or the other because karma is not a person. Can atonement come by prayer or devotion to a Bodhisattva or a Buddha? Even if those characters could offer forgiveness, it seems like sin would still be left unpaid. They would forgive sin showing it to be excusable; it is not a big deal. Christianity, on the other hand, has the only adequate theological view of sin. In Christianity sin is moral error. Ever since Adam, humans have been sinful creatures. And it sets an infinite gap between man and bliss. But it cannot be "balanced out" with an equal or greater amount of good works. If someone has ten times more good works than bad works, then he or she still has bad works on the conscience. What happens to these remaining bad works? Are they just forgiven as if they were not a big deal in the first place? Are they permitted into bliss? Are they mere illusions thus leaving no problem whatsoever? None of these options are suitable. Concerning illusion, sin is too real to us to be explained away as illusion. Concerning our sinfulness, when we are honest with ourselves we all know that we have sinned. Concerning forgiveness, to simply forgive sin at no cost treats sin like it is not of much consequence even though we know that to be false. Concerning bliss, bliss is not much good if sin keeps getting smuggled in. It seems like the scales of karma leave us with sin on our hearts and bliss either cannot tolerate us, or it must cease being perfect so that we can come in. Christianity has an answer for sin. God became man, lived a perfect life, and died the death that we deserved. He was crucified on our behalf, a substitute for us, and a covering, or atonement, for our sins. Furthermore, He was resurrected, proving that not even death could conquer Him. He promises the same resurrection unto eternal life for all who put their faith in Him as their only Lord and Savior Romans 3: This is no "easy believism" where God, like a janitor, just cleans up all our mistakes. Rather, this is a life-long commitment where we take on a new nature and begin a new relationship with God Himself Romans 6: When a person really believes God is who He says He is in the Bible, and really believes God did what He says He did in the Bible, and a person puts his or her life on that belief that person is transformed. He becomes a new creation by the power of God 2 Corinthians 5: You cannot stay the same once you have that belief. One could just as easily continue reading the morning paper after realizing his house was on fire. That knowledge the house is on fire motivates action and changes your life stop reading the paper and do something about the fire. Nor is Jesus simply an answer among many others. Meditation, works, prayer none of these can make us worthy of the infinite and eternal gift of heaven. Only when Christ pays our sin debt and we place our faith in Him can we be saved. Only then is sin covered, hope assured, and life filled with eternal meaning. Finally, it is only in Christianity that we can know that we are saved. We do not have to rely on some fleeting experience, nor do we rely on our own good works or fervent meditation. Nor do we put our faith in a false god whom we are trying to "believe-into-existence.

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Chapter 2 : Christian Buddhist " NewBuddhist

Ideally, Christian prayer and Buddhist meditation can both contribute to making the world a better place. The high importance of this book lies both in its approach and topic. The theme is timely given growing experimentation with Buddhist meditation in the West.

Overcome anger by love, overcome evil by good Overcome the miser by giving, overcome the liar by truth. From anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them back. Whoever would tend me, he should tend the sick. The liberation of mind by loving kindness surpasses them all and shines forth, bright and brilliant. Itivuttaka 27; Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so, cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings. Let your thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world. Just as rain does not penetrate a well-covered house, so too does passion not enter a well-developed mind Dh 1: Everyone who hears my words and does them is like a man who built a house on rock. The rain fell, a torrent broke against the house, and it did not fall, for it had a rock foundation. But everyone who hears my words and does not do them is like a man who built a house on sand. The rain came, the torrent broke against it, and it collapsed. The ruin of that house was great QS You winnow like chaff the errors of others, but conceal your own " like a cheat, an unlucky throw. If you focus on the errors of others, constantly finding fault, your effluents flourish. Or how can you say to your neighbor, "Friend, let me take the speck out of your eye," when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? The moon, the sun, and the Dhamma and Discipline The light of the sun and the moon illuminates the whole world, both him who does well and him who does ill, both him who stands high and him who stands low. The wise one, however, rejoicing in charity, becomes thereby happy in the beyond. Straightaway his passion faded right there, and he begged her forgiveness. Buddha the new born prince is adored and predicted by seer Asita and gods celebrate his birth. Matthew 2 Buddha holds nothing back: Digha Nikaya, Mahaparinibbana Sutta, 32 Jesus holds nothing back: I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from My Father. What if I were to teach him the Dhamma first? Exercise rulership, O One Well-gone! Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life: Jesus tells us "come and see" his true dwelling, Jesus is the truth: They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: Buddha lectures priest on bloodless sacrifice: Jesus calls priests Pharisees blind Can the blind lead the blind? Not the eating of meat. Mark 7 Buddha sends missionaries "Go forth, o bhikkhus, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, for the good, for the happiness of gods and men. Let not two go by one way. Preach the doctrine that is beautiful in its beginning, beautiful in its middle, and beautiful in its ending. Declare the holy life in its purity, completely both in the spirit and the letter. Buddha helps outcasts Thag Maha-parinibbana Sutta Jesus helps outcaste lepers Luke Let them hear the Dhamma realized by the Stainless One! He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 21 And He began to say unto them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. Open are the doors to the Deathless to those with ears. Let them show their conviction. He goes unimpeded through walls, ramparts, and mountains as if through space. He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. Kevatta Sutta Jesus can walk on water and walk through walls: And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. Alagaddupama Sutta I Jesus and the Cross: And whosoever doth not bear his cross [12], and come after me, cannot be my disciple. This Purusha is a human sacrifice or Purushamedha, from which all creation comes forth. These nominal victims were afterwards released uninjured, and, so far as the text of the White Yajurveda goes, the whole ceremony was merely emblematical. From the body of the Purusha all things come forth. In this human sacrifice, the Purusha is tied to a stake and symbolically killed. Jesus and the Sacrifice: The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1 12 For as the body is

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one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. As no works would have been received into the Canon which were not then believed to be very old, the Pitakas may be approximately placed in the fourth century B. The exhortation "Open are the doors to the Deathless to those with ears [Ariyapariyesana Sutta] is literal, and is similarly expressed in the Jesus story, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. We may, therefore, safely suppose that the original work was in circulation in India for some time before this date. A similar problem occurs in dating the Christian Gospels. The Gospels for a while, circulated in oral traditions: All early gospels have a common background. They come from an age when traditions about Jesus had not yet been fixed. Most these traditions, in fact, were still being circulated orally. Andrew Bernhard [21] However, a general consensus as to the timeline of putting those scriptures down in writing has been reached by most scholars trying to date the Gospels: All parts of all early gospels were likely written after the death of Jesus ca. The period for the writing of the early gospels might reasonably be narrowed to something like C. Click image for translation We might also assume that many Buddhist teachings were circulating in both Greek and Aramaic languages. Many scholars debate as to what language Jesus and the apostles spoke in. Many have so far concluded that Jesus spoke Aramaic and knew Hebrew. Grant Nazir for Buddha? This point is not missed altogether by scholars of comparative religions. Instead, they probably would have used the name adopted by their brothers in India: In Greek, the word Dharma may be translated as Logos The most sacred authority in Buddhism is the trinity represented by Buddha , Dharma , and Sangha. Christian theology has the Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, of whom the Son, the second Person, is equated with the Logos that is to say the Dharma , and the third Person, the Holy Spirit, is active in the community of the faithful the Sangha. In China , early Buddhist missionaries explained Buddhist ideas using Taoist terminology. Many Chinese held Buddhism to be a kind of Taoism of the foreigner and so not in conflict as they shared many of the same ideas. In the middle eastern regions where Christianity began such as Antioch , many of the kingdoms were ruled by a small minority of Greco- Seleucid rulers with subjects of a Jewish majority. Jewish terminology and myths to explain Buddhist metaphysical ideas might have been utilized by Buddhist missionaries. According to Epiphanius of Constantia Salamis , the Essenes were also called Nazarene " Nazarenos or Nazoraios [28] Evidence of such a possibility presents itself in the Greek legend of " Barlaam and Ioasaph ". The Sanskrit word bodhisatva is completely replaced with the word "Nazir" and in Hebrew means: Jesus too is referred throughout the Greek New Testament as a Nazarene and a celibate who tells his disciples to leave all material things behind if they want to be his disciple in several places in the New Testament. This was something entirely different from the Judaic tradition mentioned in Numbers 6: The use of rosaries spread from India to Europe during the Crusades through the Islamic versions. When the Catholic missionary Francis Xavier started preaching to the Japanese, he used the word Dainichi to inculturate the notion of the Christian God. Prayer postures are also quite generally associated with a particular religious tradition. Prayer with both the palms touching one another is called the "Anjali Mudra" in Indian spiritual traditions, and is a common greeting and prayer posture in all Indian spiritual traditions, including Buddhism , but is absent in Jewish traditions, whose scriptures mention raised or clasped hands [30]. However, we find this prayer position found in Christian art from the middle ages, considered a common prayer posture of Christianity [31] In literature[edit] H. Wells in his Outline of History draws strong parallels between the essential message of both Buddha and Jesus main: Durant in his The Story of Philosophy suggests that Jesus-Buddha is the feminine ideology, Nietzsche the masculine and Plato-Socrates somewhere in between. Scholars on the Parallels[edit] "With the remarkable exception of the death of Jesus on the cross , and of the doctrine of atonement by vicarious suffering, which is absolutely excluded by Buddhism, the most ancient of the Buddhistic records known to us contain statements about the life and the doctrines of Gautama Buddha which correspond in a remarkable manner, and impossibly by mere chance, with the traditions recorded in the Gospels about the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ If we could prove that they [the legends of Buddha] were unknown in the East for some centuries after Christ, the explanation would be easy. But all the evidence we have gone to prove the contrary Even some Buddhist

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legends and parables sound as if taken from the New Testament, though we know that many of them existed before the beginning of the Christian era. Doane , "Bible Myths" New York, , p. It will not be rash to assert that most of the moral truths prescribed in the gospel are to be met with in the Buddhistic scriptures. It may be said in favor of Buddhism that no philosophic-religious system has ever upheld to an equal degree the notions of a savior and deliverer, and the necessity of his mission for procuring the salvation of man.

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Chapter 3 : Talk:Christian meditation - Wikipedia

Contributors discuss the merits and disadvantages of Buddhist and Christian approaches to prayer and meditation. They go on to examine and see what can be learned from each religion's approach to prayer and see if this can be mixed without compromising religious identity.

Teresa of Avila " " for all authors in all sections will add context to them. What is Catholic church par. Being Eastern Orthodox myself, I noticed that there was some false or misleading information provided in the section dedicated to Eastern Christian meditation Section 4. I edited that part out myself and replaced it with something more accurate and cited some references produced by practitioners of the Orthodox Faith. I also feel that this section is largely lacking sufficient information. I think it should be expanded to investigate possible differences of practice between the Assyrian, Oriental Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, and Eastern Rite Catholics, if there are any. A suggestion to visit the Wikipedia article on Hesychasm would also be appropriate here. Finally, I do believe a promotion of this article up from mid-importance should be considered, since Christian meditation is actually a very important aspect of Eastern Christianity. While the Western Christians may approach the Christian faith from a scholastic angle, the Eastern Christians take a primarily experiential and meditative approach to gaining spiritual enlightenment. One cannot understand Eastern Christianity properly without engaging in the meditative practices it prescribes to some degree. This is a problem, since meditation plays in central role in the praxis of Eastern Christianity. I would suggest adding to this section the surviving teachings of such Eastern Christians as St. Anthony the Great, as well as the Philokalia. And please provide a categorization of the approaches of these people. Please also see Christian mysticism and teh talk page there. There is need for improvements on the desert Fathers etc. I need to do research before I can address the Eastern issues, but your references here and on that other page will probably help start the process. John Dunne, in a speech given at Stanford University, available for viewing online here: So then this type of meditation sounds a bit similar to Christian meditation itself, though I am not an expert on Christian meditation. Anyways, John Dunne actually cites as an example of this Buddhist type of meditation, of familiarizing oneself with a concept, the use of "mantra," repetition. Therefore the use of mantras is not for the purpose of blocking thoughts or erasing concepts, but is more akin to stimulating analysis and familiarization with a concept, with the ultimate goal of experiencing that concept more viscerally. If you want to change it some other way then feel very free to do so. And lo and behold, "Christian meditation" is now free of mantras and physical austerities, completely different from those New Agey Eastern traditions. I am sure some people have done this. As the contemplative prayer article makes clear as well as the theoria one , the concept opposed to contemplative prayer is methodical prayer. You want to write an article about methodical prayer? Please knock yourself out. But the "Christian meditation" article should obviously take the broad view and discuss meditation practices throughout Christian history, in all Christian denominations. As opposed to being simply based on the most recent communication that came out of the Vatican. Come on, I know we can do better than this. I see no references to support your assertions. Please provide here and respect teh prev BRD and discuss without starting a revert cycle. This passed the Good article mark, by the way. Did it pass the "Good article mark" while it was saying that meditare meant "to contemplate"? Did anyone with the first clue about this topic ever review it? The article itself is very much aware of the actual issues. Only, the article topic is hidden away under the section "Denominational issues", while the lead bases itself on "Christian Meditation for Dummies" devotional literature and Vatican missives. You managed to complain that " the assertion at the top is unsourced. So I must ask you, did you read the article? As far as the "denominational issues" section? Then which are you unfamiliar with, or with which "cannot you agree", is it WP: If you are interested in "discussing" this, you might also profit from familiarizing yourself with the referenced material at contemplative prayer and theoria. If you "see no references to support my assertions", I am sorry, this is not my problem, I cannot be expected to come over to your place and beat you with a stick until you can be

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bothered to look at your screen. This is pure propaganda. It is just as true as saying "Christian meditation [in our sanitized terminology] contrasts with Christian contemplative prayer, and historical practices of meditation in Christianity, as radically as the portrayal of God the Father in the Bible contrasts with a dish of pasta". Or "as radically as the portrayal of God the Father in some books of the Bible contrasts with the portrayal of God the Father in other books of the Bible". Is it suggestive polemics? You bet it is not. By the way, the theoria type articles were all hit by a hurricane: So I am aware of those articles. And in February of in Talk: So I am actually familiar with those articles, but did not do much on the contemplative prayer one, because Alan and others added some items. So I have been actually quite familiar with those articles for a long time. But obviously my knowledge of Monty Python may need touch up. However, given that you started these claims, it is up to you to support them with references and justify them, as I am sure you know. What the Bible teaches about meditation and spiritual exercises. In other words, the author is ignoring the historical practices in going back to the beginning, like a devotional reformer. And do we know that this guy is a good enough authority on Hindu meditation to make this kind of claim anyway? In my experience, Christian preachers often make claims about how Christianity is "not like X" while inaccurately portraying both Christianity and X. CALM and avoiding a revert cycle as we are discussing this. CALM items, please discuss before dramatic actions. I do not dispute that Christian Meditation is a technical term advocated by some for exactly what you are saying. If you really want to focus on a tiny sub-topic, the technical term Christian Meditation as used since the 18th century according to the referenced claim made in this article , I think you have some disambiguating to do. If you insist that "methodical prayer" is the primary meaning of "Christian meditation", you will need to propose that all material which does not concern methodical prayer must be removed and delegated to an article which actually discusses meditation in Christianity. The claim that "Christian meditation is as different from eastern meditation as God the Father from Krishna" is still unbelievably disingenuous, because it suggest there is Christian Meditation TM and then there is Eastern or New Agey Meditation, with nothing in between, completely ignoring a millennium of Christian meditation that did indeed use mantras, postures, mortification of the flesh and what have you. If there is anything "dramatic" going on here, there you have it: I spotted a piece of blatant denominationalist propaganda and removed it, then you came along and restored it for no indentifiable reason, and when challenged did not even bother to defend your action. What is the point in that type of statement? What does it achieve? As it turned out I was fully aware of the other articles and had commented on them. As for reading this article, I actually wrote much of it. Is this statement becoming of a Wikipedia administrator? I think an established administrator has a clear duty to set a good example, and I was surprised to read that. Please clarify why that type of statement is necessary. Please clarify your statement that: Please clarify which Wikipedia policies makes it not a problem to make assertions sans references. References are the bedrock of WP: Hence how can an established administrator say that not having references is "not a problem"? Again, I think it is the duty of an administrator to set a good example by respecting WP: Please clarify your statement that I am "the far end of tendentious editing". Exactly how is that statement justified? I had only made 2 edits to the article. One was using my absolute right by WP: BRD to revert a major totally unreferenced change and ask for a discussion. How is the tendentious editing after one edit? The second edit was an objection based on the first BRD and your unilateral change of the definition of the article title, without a reference as a support. And as it turned out your edit was double reverted anyway. Why is that type of statement made? Please clarify how your statement that I "do not seem to be inclined to be part of its solution. AGF afetr just 4 talk page edits by me, one of which was an initial comment, the other clarified the other articles and the third provided a reference. The 4th was a WP: I am sure you are familiar with WP: Hence given that the discussion had just started, why was that statement necessary? I order to make progress in this discussion, please clear the air by clarifying the situation and provide answers to the above questions. Is a personal apology to me a good idea? I will address the technical issues once the air has cleared on these questions. The lead should focus more on what Christian meditation--historically and in broad terms--IS. Clowney comparative item is no longer there. So we can do

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that later, or you can make a separate section for it now, if you like.

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Chapter 4 : Terry Muck (Author of Buddhists Talk About Jesus, Christians Talk About the Buddha)

Christians talk about Buddhist meditation, Buddhists talk about Christian prayer [Item Preview](#) [remove-circle](#) [Share](#) or [Embed This Item](#).

Edited by Rita M. Gross and Terry C. It is popularly assumed that meditation enhances well-being and relieves stress. In the West, Asian practices are taught to persons from mainly Christian and Jewish backgrounds as new forms of spirituality, often presented as dramatically different from monotheistic traditions. Yet some practitioners consider meditation and other forms of Asian spirituality as enhancing rather than replacing worship of God. This book presents essays by twelve authors that explore similarities and differences between Buddhist meditation and Christian prayer. The book reprints pieces that originally appeared in the journal *Buddhist-Christian Studies* in and It is thoroughly dialogical in format. Part 1 contains five Christian reflections on Buddhist spiritual practice followed by two Buddhist responses, while part 2 consists of five Buddhist reflections on Christian spiritual practice with two Christian responses. Many of the contributors are connected with the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies. Importantly, they combine academic and experiential knowledge of the two religions. The symmetry of the chapter layout is pleasing and apt. Sociologically, the major impetus for this dialogue is the fact that a growing number of Christians have found Buddhist meditation fruitful. However, these Christians have not left behind their original religious identification. As they interact with Buddhists, dialogue has emerged comparing the two traditions. Clearly for Christians practicing some Buddhism, the emphasis is on mutual appreciation and commonality. To examine the motivation for interreligious dialogue, it is fitting to ask, whose interests does the dialogue serve? First and foremost, the interests are Christian. While Christian authors have gained from Buddhist spiritual practice, Buddhists have not adapted Christian prayer techniques in return. But although the genealogy of dialogue has Christian origins, the editors intend to take a neutral approach. They frame the topic broadly and invite [End Page] contributors to remark on any facet of the other tradition, including critical points. Frohlich belongs to a Catholic religious order for women and finds Buddhism helpful for developing discipline in prayer. Muck has found reflection on Theravada teaching about morality *sila* to be an impetus to overcome the theological dichotomy between faith and works and to develop the importance of spiritual readiness that cuts across religious traditions. There are many overlapping insights among these chapters that Grace Burford helpfully summarizes in her response essay: Christian appreciation of Buddhism blurs religious boundaries but never requires abandonment of church or creed. In part 2, the contributions of Buddhist authors display more academic distance because of the fact that the authors are not engaged in Christian practices in their Buddhist lives. But the essays are nonetheless personal in reflecting on subjective impressions gained from the encounter with Christian spirituality. One of the most exciting areas of exploration in these essays concerns how Christian petitionary and devotional prayer bears resemblance to certain types of Buddhist practice. Robert Aiken catalogues seven Mahayana Buddhist practices and considers Christian analogues, focusing on the use of words in Buddhist mantras, sutras, and vows. He explores how Buddhists may supplicate higher beings for protection and assistance, yet insists that these beings are metaphors rather than reified entities. He ends his essay that accentuates parallels with an enigmatic "Yes, but. Rita Gross hones in on a common theistic [End Page] misconception of Buddhist nontheism embodied in the question, why would Buddhists pray if there is no God listening? She asserts that Buddhists believe in the relative existence of divine beings, analogous to Christian belief in saints or angels. But an enlightened person recognizes the absolute nonexistence of these deities. Buddhist prayers are skillful means to realize nonduality, and their importance lies in the effect they have on the petitioner. Kenneth Tanaka explores the stereotypical image of a young girl kneeling by her bed praying to reflect on the intimacy and trust that Christians place in God. He observes that, in Japan, ordinary visitors to temples regularly enact devotional practices that request healing and other benefits, just as Christians do. He hints that perhaps mainstream Buddhism is too monastic and unfairly looks

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down upon such petitions. Both are world-affirming and transformative, although the Buddhist view does not dualize good and evil. Unfortunately, in his essay, knowledge of the Jesus prayer is from books rather than personal contact, and differences between Amida Buddha and God are not explored. In the last contribution, Mahinda Deegalle considers how Sri Lankan Buddhist rituals request protection from deities, like some Christian petitions, and also how monastic Buddhist prayers serve as tools for mindfulness. She suggests that newly formed Western Buddhist groups may strategically employ petitionary exercises to cater to the sensibilities of converts with theistic backgrounds. In the responses to the five essays by Buddhists, Donald Mitchell accentuates the parallels discovered by the authors, drawing on Christian writers such as Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. In fact, Christian mystics figure largely in the spirituality of these Christian practitioners interested in Buddhism, who appreciate silence and unknowing. Ursula King organizes her response by distinguishing between similarities in practices chanting, petitioning and similarities in the results of spiritual practices love, wisdom. To her, the center of Christian prayer is the lives of saints and mystics, even if this heritage may be neglected by Christians. She makes a plea for the close interrelation of prayer and meditation and the need for Christians to recognize this complementarity. The respondents hold that Christianity spirituality moves in the same direction as Buddhism. In the conclusion, Rita Gross provides a persuasive hypothesis for why Christians borrow prayer techniques from Buddhism and not vice versa. Her explanation is that Buddhism offers "content-free" varieties of meditation samatha that calm the mind and center on the breath. In contrast, meditation that explores Buddhist concepts vipashyana is not borrowed by Christians because it is not suitable conceptually. In return, the reason that Buddhists do not use techniques of Christian prayer is because theological concepts are always involved. It is significant that this published dialogue not only aims toward comparative reflection, but also considers the social implications of prayer and meditation. Ideally, Christian prayer and Buddhist meditation can both contribute to making the world a better place. The high importance of this book lies both in its approach and topic. The theme is timely given growing experimentation with Buddhist meditation in the West. Quite unusual for an academic publication, the choice of authors who are all practitioners provides rare insights into both religions. The book has much to commend it, but there are a few weak points. The Christian essays are on the whole shorter and less detailed than their Buddhist counterparts. In the introduction, the reader is told that conference presentations were given on this topic, and some printed essays read more like informal talks than others. Direct confrontation of religious differences seems lacking. Sometimes I found myself wishing for a less peaceable tone among authors, even though I agree with the editors about the importance of good will and humility between dialogue partners. Looking at the book as a whole, it rather underplays differences between the two religions. To put it another way, the emphasis lies heavily on similarities, especially among Christian contributors. Mainstream Christianity holds a concept of God that is at least to some degree external, whether conceived more impersonally as a higher being, or as a heavenly father. In this context, prayer would seem less comparable with Buddhist practices. Broader representation from Christian practitioners would have made the dialogue more representative and sharply differentiated. A related issue of critical importance concerns "popular" practices of meditation and prayer. Authors on both sides seem uncomfortable with asking for what seems to be magical intervention from above. For the most part, Christian authors distance themselves from reified notions of deity and emphasize mystical divine presence, while Buddhist authors explain that calling upon Bodhisattvas does not imply external assistance. There seems to be consensus that prayer and meditation are for the purpose of changing the person, and not receiving help from outside. Both sides demythologize their traditions and emphasize human transformation. While such humanist emphasis has its persuasiveness, it does not represent the fullness of either tradition, it is condescending toward popular practices, and it is particularly controversial among Christians. This book demonstrates convincingly that there are more areas of overlap between [End Page] Buddhism and Christianity than commonly perceived. It proves that this topic is a highly promising focus for continued dialogue. Indeed, the asymmetries between the two traditions deserve much further analysis. The dialogue uncovers often neglected areas of Christian spirituality. It prompts Buddhists to

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think about Christian practice, which is otherwise may not be considered. Mutual understanding among religions is an important task advanced by this dialogue. The audience for this book is wide. It is accessible to ordinary readers and students, as well as academics. This dialogue enriches both intellectual and practical reflection on Christian-Buddhist dialogue and may even prompt readers to deeper spiritual engagement.

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Chapter 5 : I am a Buddhist. Why should I consider becoming a Christian?

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He, too, has been on a U. He has opposed violence for more than 50 years. Martin Luther King, Jr. Nhat Hanh insists he is a monk, not a politician. But as he toured the U. Shielding his eyes from the sun, he practiced his customary attentive, so-called mindful walking " to the Library of Congress to talk to Members of Congress, and others, about peace in a world of terrorism. He said since the level of hate and violence has gone up. Using violence to suppress violence is not the correct way. America has to wake up to that reality. Nhat Hanh became a Zen Buddhist monk when he was During the Vietnam War, Nhat Hanh actively opposed the fighting, offending all sides. He developed what he called Engaged Buddhism: If you hear the bombs falling, you know, you know that you have to go out and help. Because of his anti-war activities, Nhat Hanh had to leave Vietnam. In the s, he founded a Buddhist community in France and has spent most of the years since teaching, leading retreats and writing. In all, he has written more than 75 books. Concentration on every activity " walking, breathing, eating, everything. He says this mindfulness leads to understanding the roots of suffering, which encourages compassion that can dissolve anger. I asked him what Buddhism has to say to people of other religions. I think if Buddhism can help, it is the concrete methods of practice. We have the same kind of teaching, but in Buddhism there are more concrete tools. There are ways to transform and to reduce the amount of suffering in our families, in our schools. We, as practitioners of transformation and healing, we know how to do it, how to reduce the level of violence. Are there times when it is right to use violence in order to protect yourself, or your family, or nation? If you see someone who is trying to shoot, to destroy, you have to do your best in order to prevent him or her to do so. But you must do it out of your compassion, of your willingness to protect, and not out of anger. That is the key. Can a person be both a Buddhist and a Christian? There are many, many Christians who practice Buddhism and they become better and better Christians all the time. Nhat Hanh thinks violence in America has increased in recent years. He says one reason is too much production and consumption of the wrong kinds of things " movies and television, for instance, that stimulate craving and violence. I think we have the Statue of Liberty on the East Coast. But in the name of freedom, people have done a lot of damage. I think we have to build a Statue of Responsibility on the West Coast in order to counterbalance. Because liberty without responsibility is not true liberty. We are not free to destroy. The continuing struggle in Iraq triggered questions for Nhat Hanh everywhere he went. I think America is now caught in Iraq, like in Vietnam not very long ago. And you believed that search and destroy is the right path. But the more you continued that kind of operation, the more Communists you created, and finally you had to withdraw. I am afraid that you are doing exactly the same thing in Iraq. The only way for Americans to get emancipated from this situation is to help build the United Nations into a real body of peace so that the United Nations would take over the problem of Iraq and the Middle East. America is powerful enough to do that. He also urged Americans to lobby their elected officials. We have to offer them our insight, our compassion. We cannot just afford for them to be surrounded by advisers who do not have that insight, that compassion. There was no way to tell how many people here agreed with Nhat Hanh, but there was no doubt about their interest in what he had to say. He has done this before, and he says " for those attending " it always brings reconciliation. Muck and Rita M.

Chapter 6 : Thich Nhat Hanh | September 19, | Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly | PBS

This book adopts the format of the editorsAE previous book, Buddhists Talk about Jesus, Christians Talk about the Buddha. In that book eight scholar-practitioners--four of them Buddhist and four Christian--explored their relationship to the great.

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Chapter 7 : Christians pray, Buddhists " NewBuddhist

*This book adopts the format of the editors' previous book, *Buddhists Talk about Jesus, Christians Talk about the Buddha*. In that book eight scholar-practitioners--four of them Buddhist and four Christian--explored their relationship to the great religious figure of the other tradition.*

Chapter 8 : Christians Talk about Buddhist Meditation, Buddhists Talk About Christian Prayer - Google Books

*1 Terry C. Muck, "Introduction," in Rita M. Gross and Terry Muck, eds, *Christians Talk about Buddhist Meditation and Buddhists Talk about Christian Prayer* (New York: Continuum,): at 9. It is important to note about the editors of this book: Gross is a practicing Buddhist.*

Chapter 9 : Summary/Reviews: Christians talk about Buddhist meditation,

Prayer, as many Christian teachers have pointed out, is more about the attitude of the person praying than about the object or subject of prayer. It is an expression of hope and trust in the compassion that subtends all that arises.