

**LEARN CONTEMPLATIVE SPIRITUALITY/MYSTICISM (CSM) THE
SBC WAY,
WITH BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA**

By Rev. Ken Silva, Southern Baptist pastor-teacher, May 28, 2008

At the [Baptist State Convention of North Carolina](#) (BSCNC) of the [Southern Baptist Convention](#) there isn't even an attempt to hide its openly embracing corrupt [Contemplative Spirituality/Mysticism](#) (CSM) and its [Contemplative/Centering Prayer](#) (CCP), which flowered in the antibiblical monastic traditions of apostate [Roman Catholicism](#), i.e. not Christian.

Contemplative/Centering Prayer—TM-Lite A-Ok For Southern Baptists in NC

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent! Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices! When any Israelite or any alien living in Israel separates himself from me and sets up idols in his heart and puts a wicked stumbling block before his face and then goes to a prophet to inquire of me, I the LORD will answer him myself.’”

“I will set my face against that man and make him an example and a byword. I will cut him off from my people. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

[\(Ezekiel 14:6-8\)](#)

The reason for this snowballing evangelical infatuation with CSM is very likely due to the growth within mainstream evangelical circles of [The Cult of Guru Richard Foster](#) with an able assist from ordained Southern Baptist minister [Dallas Willard](#). [Apprising Ministries](#) has shown you that more and more pastors, ministers and leaders are being conditioned (think frog in the kettle) through spurious [Spiritual Formation](#) courses in college and/or seminary to see this CSM as a viable approach to God.

You should know that among the primary textbooks used in these SF classes, not only in SBC seminaries but in *most* evangelical schools, are

works by Willard and his associate [Living Spiritual Teacher](#) and [Quaker](#) mystic “Roshi” [Richard Foster](#) from which their so-called “spiritual disciplines” largely culled from Roman Catholic and Quaker mystics is then taught.

In [Contemplative Spirituality/Mysticism \(CSM\) in Baptist State Convention of North Carolina \(SBC\)](#) AM gives you the links where you can view the current [SpiritLines Newsletter](#) (SLN), “Written by: Wendy Minton Edwards, *Spiritual Formation Coach*,” of BSCNC as well as the opportunity to [View \[A\] Past Edition of SpiritLines](#).

As I begin to close this opening piece let me point out that the current May 2008 issue of SLN is absolutely chock full of counter-Reformation CSM skubalon. For example under *Prayer Resources* we have books by teachers of CSM such as Guru Foster himself, Jan Johnson, and the late Roman Catholic priest [Henri Nouwen](#):

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. New York: Harper & Row, 1978, 1988.

_____. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.

Johnson, Jan. *When The Soul Listens: Finding Rest and Direction in Contemplative Prayer*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Navpress, 1999.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *With Open Hands: Bring Prayer into Your Life*. New York: Ave Maria Press, 1972. ([Online source](#))

Southern Baptists Encouraged To Learn CCP From The All-Stars Of CSM

Or how about this quote in SLN from CSM Golden Buddha [Thomas Merton](#):

“A lot of ‘distractions’ would vanish if we realized that we are not bound at all times to ignore the practical problems of our life when we are at prayer.”

Spiritual Direction & Meditation. Thomas Merton. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1960, p. 96.

O, and if you'd like to see where the practice of CCP would lead Merton we refer you to [Thomas Merton and the Buddhas](#) and so he can tell

you himself from his own journal. Also in the May 2008 SN of the BSCNC we have the “BOOK REVIEW” for “***THE SOUL AT REST: A JOURNEY INTO CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER*** by Tricia McCary Rhodes” where SBC Spiritual Guru Edwards tells us:

Anyone desiring a more reflective quiet time, greater intimacy with God, or genuine rest for his/her weary soul will find *The Soul at Rest* to be just what the doctor ordered. In fact, the book is designed to accommodate five daily quiet time experiences for eight weeks. Each session builds on the previous ones, providing an “inner prayer journey” that explains and prepares one to experience contemplative prayer.

Author Tricia McCary Rhodes defines contemplative prayer as “communing with God through quiet moments of meditation, listening, and reflecting on Him.” (ibid.)

And finally Spiritual Formation Coach Edwards of the BSCNC state convention of the allegedly “Protestant” SBC wants to make sure that we Southern Baptists know all about the:

Five-Day Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat
June 16-20, 2008

St. Francis Springs Prayer Center, Stoneville, NC
Retreat Leaders: Joan Ricci Hurst, Paul Supina

The 5-Day Intensive Centering Prayer retreat is an in-depth experience into profound stillness and silence. (ibid.)

By the way [Joan Ricci Hurst](#) is part of the Outreach Staff of, and Winston-Salem, NC contact person for, [Contemplative Outreach Ltd.](#) Well now, it just so happens that this organization is dedicated to advancing the CCP materials of Roman Catholic monk and Living Spiritual Teacher [Thomas Keating](#):

The Board of Trustees, Resource Faculty, and Coordinators maintain the integrity of the method of Centering Prayer and its conceptual background as articulated by Thomas Keating in *Open Mind, Open Heart*, and other practices and programs offered by Contemplative Outreach. ([Online source](#))

And COL President Gail Fitzpatrick-Hopler further informs us that:

Father Thomas Keating has been the spiritual wisdom figure of Contemplative Outreach from the beginning. His guidance and formation, along with his published works and videotape series, provide the main content for our workshops, retreats, and ongoing programs. ([Online source](#))

As a service to Southern Baptists in North Carolina below is Roshie Keating with an introduction to CCP. Men and women, the time has arrived where you'd better wake up to the fact that this spurious CSM has zero place in the allegedly "Protestant" SBC—or within your own evangelical denomination for that matter—and it was never part of what SBC minister Rev. Dr. Walter Martin so often called "the historic, orthodox Christian faith."

So it is as I said before. Anyone who can't recognize the obvious presence of these *doctrines of demons* of CSM, which have right now slithered into the heart of the American Christian Church from their nest in Hell, really does need to get on their face and call upon the Great Physician, because you do have a most serious case of "me-no-wanna-see-i-tis."

**LEARN CONTEMPLATIVE SPIRITUALITY/MYSTICISM (CSM) THE
SBC WAY WITH BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH
CAROLINA AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR JAN JOHNSON**

By Rev. Ken Silva, Southern Baptist pastor-teacher on Aug 26, 2008

In [Part One](#) of this series [Apprising Ministries](#) showed you that the [Baptist State Convention of North Carolina](#) (BSCNC) of the [Southern Baptist Convention](#) isn't even attempting to hide its open embrace of corrupt [Contemplative Spirituality/Mysticism](#) (CSM) and its [Contemplative/Centering Prayer](#) (CCP), which flowered in the antibiblical monastic traditions of apostate [Roman Catholicism](#), i.e. no longer Christian.

With an able assist from ordained Southern Baptist minister [Dallas Willard](#) currently [The Cult of Guru Richard Foster](#) is conditioning more and more mainstream evangelical pastors, leaders, and ministers (think frog in the kettle) through spurious [Spiritual Formation](#) (SF) courses in college and/or seminary to see this CSM as a viable approach to God. And AM reminds you that primary among the textbooks used in these SF classes, not only in SBC seminaries but in *most* evangelical schools, are works by Willard and his associate [Living Spiritual Teacher](#) and [Quaker](#) mystic “Roshi” [Richard Foster](#) from which their so-called “spiritual disciplines” largely culled from heretical Roman Catholic and Quaker mystics is then taught.

But as for those whose hearts are devoted to their vile images and detestable idols, I will bring down on their own heads what they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Dr. Wendy Edwards “Not” Recommends Spiritual Director Jan Johnson

Specific now to BSCNC once again would be “Spiritual Formation Coach” Dr. Wendy Edwards of the [Office of Prayer for Evangelization & Spiritual Awakening, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina](#) and her [SpiritLines Newsletters](#) (SLN). In the [November 2007 SLN](#) SF Coach Edwards shares with us about “Christian Meditation.” Under “Christian Meditation Helps” we are pointed to some of the following books “for informational purposes only. This is not an exhaustive or recommended list”:

Edwards, Tilden. *Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Our Lives to the Awareness of God*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995.

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1978, 1988.

Guyon, Jeanne. *Experiencing God through Prayer*. New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House Publishers, 1984.

Johnson, Jan. *When the Soul Listens: Finding Rest and Direction in Contemplative Prayer*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: NavPress, 1999.

Stepping around decidedly dubious sources of errant information like Tilden Edwards of the [Shalem Institute For Spiritual Formation](#), Roshi Richard Foster and Jeanne Guyon for now, I wish to focus our attention here on Jan

Johnson. I begin by telling you that fellow SBC minister [Dallas Willard](#) happens to be the General Editor of the Spiritual Formation Line published by *NavPress*, a “line [that] is designed to contribute to this renewed vision of Christian spiritual formation.”

One may wonder, so what? Well, one of the books in this series would be ***When The Soul Listens: Finding Rest And Direction In Contemplative Prayer*** (WtSL) by “retreat speaker” [Jan Johnson](#) ~~recommended~~...oops, make that “not” recommended, by SF Guru Edwards under “Christian Meditation Resources” that she wants you to be aware of in the issue of SLN referenced above, but *ahem* is not recommending.

So I guess whether or not this is a recommendation by our SF Coach would, as another prominent Southern Baptist has said, depend upon what the meaning of the word is...um, is. Anyway, Jan Johnson tells us that she, ah—is, “a writer, speaker and spiritual director in southern California.” And interestingly enough under “Teaching” at her Website we read Johnson’s been “*lectio divina* instructor for Dallas Willard’s Fuller Seminary class: Spirituality and Ministry.”

Among her writings she lists [Dallas Willard’s Study Guide to the Divine Conspiracy](#). And Johnson also recommends that:

For more in-depth information and exercises, take a look at my book *Savoring God’s Word*, which explains both *lectio divina* and Ignatian style meditation in detail. ([Online source](#))

O, and another SBC outlet also “not” recommending Jan Johnson’s WtSL is [Lifeway Christian Stores](#). There Southern Baptists may purchase this book in which:

Jan Johnson encourages readers to get away from the formulas and ten-step plans to discover true contemplative prayer. Readers will discover that listening to God and learning to interact with Him through prayer is the real answer to a deeper relationship with Him... ‘When The Soul Listens’ offers a clear path to a fulfilling connection with God. ([Online source](#))

Entering The Spiritual Twilight Zone In The Silence Of “Christian” Meditation

In WtSL Johnson gives us the following instruction about the meditation of CCP:

The two primary tools of the contemplative way are the spiritual disciplines of *silence* and *solitude*... Madame Jeanne Guyon, a sought-after counselor and author of the seventeenth-century classic *Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ*, wrote that two kinds of people keep silent:

The first is one who has nothing to say, and the other is one who has too much to say. In the case of the deeper encounter with the Lord, the latter is true. Silence is produced from [abundant life in God], not from lack. This silence is rich, full and alive!

... Both silence and solitude require discipline at first, but then they become enjoyable and refreshing... Thomas Kelly assures us. It is not an arduous task, but “nothing more than turning our heart toward God and receiving in turn His love.” (79, 80, 81)

Next Johnson goes on to speculate, “In solitary silence, we encounter the love of God,” but then she quotes universalist Roman Catholic mystic [Henri Nouwen](#) to caution us that if we really want God to touch us, “It requires a lot of inner solitude and silence” (82), i.e. so-called “Christian” meditation. She also wants us to know in WtSL that, “Silence and solitude are the outward, physical manifestations of the inward surrender of the heart.” Johnson explains that in CCP aka meditation:

We relinquish talking, analyzing, and enjoying the company of others in order to attend only to God. This relinquishment is crucial. “We have all heard this holy Whisper at times,” wrote Thomas Kelly, a Quaker college professor... “[But w]e have not surrendered *all else*, to attend to it alone.” (83)

As a matter of fact we note below that Southern Baptist SF Roshi Edwards herself has apparently heard it and has now relinquished herself to this deception as well. In the [March 2007](#) “Silence” edition of SLN Edwards regurgitates the same ol’ CSM mantra of mindless mystic meditation as she also *wink* not recommends Nouwen:

The spiritual practice of silence has proven helpful to spiritual seekers throughout history in seeking genuine experiences of God’s presence. Yet we all know that wholeheartedly engaging silence is quite a challenge...

Quieting the inner noise, putting aside all the thoughts, concerns, fears, needs, and problems that fill our minds takes intentionality and effort. It does not come easy for most of us. That is why silence observance is referred to as discipline. We have to discipline ourselves in order to be still and hear God.

I've come to appreciate numerous resources that have helped me develop a desire for silence and learn to engage and even enjoy being silent in God's presence. I've come to crave personal silent moments alone with God as well as silent moments shared with spiritual friends in small groups and silent moments amidst worship. A few of these helpful tools are listed as follows...

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *The Way of The Heart*. New York, NY: The Seabury Press, 1981. ([Online source](#))

By the way, for more on the messed-up mystic Madame Jeanne Guyon mentioned a couple of times earlier in this piece I will refer you to [The Mindless Mysticism of Madame Guyon](#) by [Personal Freedom Outreach](#). And in closing this for now let me briefly enlighten you concerning Thomas R. Kelly, yet another spiritually corrupt Quaker mystic. Johnson's quotes of Kelly come from his *A Testament of Devotion*. You may also wish to know that Guru Edwards herself also, um, not recommends AToD in the [December 2007 SLN](#) under "Spiritual Formation Resources."

However, on page 3 of my copy of AToD let point out to you that mystic Kelly shares the heretical Quaker doctrine that God is already dwells within all mankind. But this teaching itself is actually a mythical musing of classic mysticism often referred to as "the divine spark" or "a spark of the divine."

In fact Kelly himself begins by quoting a veritable superstar of mysticism:

Meister Eckhart wrote: "As thou art in church or cell, that same frame of mind carry into the world, into its turmoil and its fitfulness" Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctu [sic] of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice,...the Light within,... It is the Shekinah of the soul, the Presence in the midst. Here is the slumbering Christ, stirring to be awakened to become the soul we clothe in earthly form and action. And He is within us all.

But casting these mythical mystic musings back to Hell where they belong, I now proclaim to you, no; “He” is not. Since I cover in detail this blasphemous idea in [Understanding the New Spirituality: God Indwells Mankind](#) here I will simply remind you that it is written:

*Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, **if the Spirit of God lives in you**. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. ([Romans 8:8-9](#))*

Yet amazingly men and women, it is exactly this kind of neopagan nonsense that SBC women like Dr. Wendy Edwards and SBC men like Dallas Willard are introducing into the Southern Baptist Convention—and to the Body of Christ at large—under the covert cover of spiritual formation. But don’t be fooled because this SF skubalon is really just Eastern religious teachings repacked for careless Christians in the West.