

*The Highest Adventure*  
ENCOUNTERING

# GOD



Mike Shreve

*Former Teacher of Kundalini Yoga*



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The Highest Adventure: ENCOUNTERING GOD

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THE “TRUE LIGHT” SERIES

Stories of Personal Transformation

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One of my favorite quotes sums up the focus of my life for over four decades:

*“Religion alive . . . calls the soul to the highest adventure it can undertake.”<sup>1/\*</sup>*

This is speaking of far more than mere ceremonies, rituals, traditions and doctrines. “*Religion alive*” is true spirituality: something that supasses the intellect, transcends the natural realm, and propels the seeker into an awareness of supernatural reality and ultimate truth.

So I wholeheartedly agree. The most exciting, most fulfilling, most intense adventure of my life has been the pursuit of absolute truth and a real, dynamic relationship with God. Many different paths bore my footprints before I turned down an ancient trail, often overlooked, that led to the True Light; but the Spirit of God did lead me, and for this I am eternally grateful.

## **Monumental Moments**

It's easy now to look back and see the primary turning points: the songs, books, insights, experiences, relationships, and new ideas that triggered profound changes in my belief system. At times, when I thought I was thinking 'independently,' I was simply caught up by some megatrend – with millions of others who also thought they were thinking 'independently.'

Then there were supernatural influences: times when God intervened in my life, and times when dark, malevolent beings made a play for my soul. Sometimes these turning points were positive and powerful; at other times, they were negative and painful. However, they are all monumental moments.

When I look back, I feel their worth and significance all over again. It's as if pillar-like monuments have been erected in the depth of my being that I can revisit from time to time, until fresh, heartfelt worship ascends, like incense, toward the One who knew the end from the beginning and gave me grace, in advance, to complete the journey.

## Personal Transformation

According to the Buddhist tradition, a young man named Siddhartha Gautama encountered this kind of ‘monumental moment’ around the age of twenty-nine. Modern writers might call it a ‘paradigm shift’ (a personal transformation that dramatically changed his worldview). Though sheltered all his life within the confines of a royal palace, Siddhartha dared to venture into the outside world. According to legend, it was during this excursion that he viewed the “Four Sights” – a sick man, an old man, a corpse, and an ascetic.

No longer could he remain spiritually asleep on a bed of princely ease. Having witnessed firsthand the suffering of this world, he was jarred from a self-serving mentality. The resulting desperation to find answers became, as author William Burroughs puts it, “the raw material of drastic change.”<sup>2</sup>

The sheltered palace protégé made an unorthodox decision. Walking away from the opulent surroundings to which he’d grown accustomed, instead, he turned down the narrow and seldom-walked road of renunciation. Hoping

to transcend the natural world, he subjected himself to intense ascetic disciplines. After many years of seeking, while meditating under the Bodhi Tree, he claimed an experience of ultimate reality he called Nirvana. As a result, to those who subscribe to his philosophy, he became the “Buddha” (the “awakened one”).

Buddha’s conclusions and my revelation differ drastically in some areas, but I still deeply respect the passion for truth he displayed and the compelling, spiritual thirst that sent him on such an amazing quest.

A near-death experience in my freshman year of college proved to be a pivotal point for me. That almost-tragic night, I had the distinct impression that my soul was leaving my body and passing into a very ominous, pulsating darkness. I felt totally unprepared.

It’s been said that those who desire to die well must first learn to live well. I certainly had not been living well, so I wasn’t ready to die well, either.



## A Negative Becomes a Positive

My near-fatal brush with this ever-present stalker of the human race actually helped me. A negative experience became a positive one, because I emerged with a new set of values. My former life no longer possessed an attractive aura. In my mind, the gyrating, sensory-pounding, party-going ‘music’ of college life slowed down and decreased in volume, until it became a still picture: static, silent, and unappealing. As if suspended in time, I looked around and saw only empty and confused faces, even among those who claimed to be the most educated and informed.

I’d been a rock musician in my latter high school years, but the alcohol, the drugs, the absence of moral boundaries took its toll, and that kind of lifestyle no longer looked very ‘rock-solid.’ Spiritual quicksand was slowly pulling me under and I knew it was just a matter of time before I succumbed. When I entered Florida State University, I strongly considered majoring in oceanography, but after my near-death encounter, I painfully realized, *“I could spend my entire life searching out the depths of the ocean and*

*never discover the depth of my own being.*” So it all appeared frustratingly unimportant.

An inward voice kept probing with admonitions similar to the one given to Horatio, in the Shakespearean play, *Hamlet*:

*“There are more things in heaven and earth  
... than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”<sup>3</sup>*

In an effort to break out of the boundaries of ‘normalcy’ – imposed by friends, by society, and by my own mind – I started exploring nearly every new philosophy or belief system that crossed my path. A longing for lasting answers drove me to become somewhat of a recluse. Once again, an inward sense of desperation became “the raw material of drastic change.”

After years of being somewhat insensitive, I turned my gaze once again toward religion, more importantly, toward *spirituality*. I was raised a Roman Catholic. Until my early teens I was very devoted, but the idea that one religion was the only way to God, to the exclusion of all others, just seemed too narrow-minded, too unreasonable. Besides, I decided I could no longer embrace something just because it was part of my cultural

or family belief system. I purposed to ‘wipe the slate clean’ and start from a pure and unbiased beginning point.

Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.”<sup>4/\*</sup> I resolved that beliefs left unexamined might not be worth much either. Intending to explore various religions of the world with an open mind, I embarked on a quest for the “True Light.” Even though I recognized I was studying the theories, opinions and supposed ‘revelations’ of others, my primary goal was to experience God for myself. I had faith that something somewhere would prove to be my connecting link with ultimate reality. Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s words well describe my inner stance at that time:

*Earth’s crammed with heaven;  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes,  
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.<sup>5</sup>*

Blackberries held no interest for me any longer. I was willing to ‘take off my shoes’ and look at things differently. I was definitely searching for my ‘burning bush.’ All of this was definitely progress

in the right direction. Little did I anticipate the unique turns my life would take before reaching my goal. The first main milestone in the road was an encounter with ...

## **New Religious Concepts**

I began reading a lot of literature that opened the door to new philosophies, metaphysical ideas and Far Eastern religions. Over a period of months I visited a wide spectrum of written works, like Ayn Rand and her philosophy of “Objectivism” (*Atlas Shrugged*), Herman Hess (*Siddhartha*), Levi Dowling (*The Aquarian Gospel*), Meher Baba (*God Speaks*), Helena Blavatsky (*The Secret Doctrine*), and books by various gurus and out-of-the-box thinkers. New phraseology filled up my mind, words like: reincarnation, karma, yoga, astral projection, soul travel, mantras, chakras, the third eye, nirvana, Ascended Masters, self-realization and God-consciousness. All of these concepts exploded in me with a fiery fervor to know more.

I joined an Edgar Cayce meditation group in Orlando, Florida. It was very easy to adapt to their approach because they used “The Lord’s

Prayer” as a basis for meditation. I had uttered this prayer thousands of times as a Catholic. Because it was already deeply rooted in my psyche, it was a perfect, non-intrusive means of transitioning into a new worldview.

I quickly embraced the subtle changes in meanings assigned to various words or phrases, which no longer promoted a Biblical perspective, but a metaphysical one. Not abruptly, but slowly and consistently, my outlook on spirituality was changing.

The tension Edgar Cayce felt between the new ‘prophetic’ insights he received during hypnosis sessions, as opposed to his long held Biblical beliefs, intrigued me. Why did he struggle for years trying to reconcile the two views? Now I understand.

In the fall of 1969, I went to hear Yogi Bhajan, a guru from India who claimed he came to North America to help the ‘flower child,’ ‘peace’ generation find their way spiritually. He taught us about yoga (a word meaning “yoked,” implying that the devotee is yoked with God). The emphasis was not on obtaining a ‘relationship’ with God, but rather,

on attaining a ‘realization’ of our inherent oneness with God (actually, an understanding that *we are God*). God was referred to as ‘the Great Computer’ into which the right mechanical mantra must be ‘inserted’ in order to bring forth the desired results. That clearly threw the responsibility on seekers to use the right esoteric methods in order to successfully ascend to higher realms of consciousness.

With his full beard, long black hair, and intense dark eyes, this teacher of Far Eastern mysticism was somewhat imposing and quite convincing. However, it was much more than the mystique surrounding this tall, turban clad Sikh that attracted followers. It was more than the passion he seemed to display concerning his beliefs. It was more than just the stimulus of a new and intriguing approach to spirituality.

It was the promise that we could personally penetrate the supernatural realm and experience ultimate reality ourselves. This drew me to Yogi Bhajan’s words and to the spiritual discipline he was propagating (Kundalini Yoga, also known as “The Yoga of Awareness”).

## Escaping the ‘Jaws of the Tiger’

Attaining my ‘higher self’ became the primary focus of my day-to-day existence. In between and after college classes, I used every available hour to pursue the goal of ‘reaching enlightenment.’ The Hindu Bhakti poet, Surdas, warned:

*“Without devotion to God, you will make yourself into a stale crumb to be eaten by the tiger of time.”\**

Appalled at the thought of becoming a stale crumb, the following spring, I decided to use my time more wisely, quitting school to escape the ‘jaws of the tiger.’

Packing up my belongings, I left Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, to help start an ashram in Daytona Beach (a commune where yoga devotees live together to more effectively practice their disciplines). Every day involved many hours of meditation and Mantra Yoga (the chanting of certain Hindu words and phrases designed to carry a person to higher levels of awareness).

We also devoted ourselves to the study of

Hatha Yoga. This centered on physical exercises (*asanas*) and breathing exercises (*pranayama*), both of which were aimed at opening supposed invisible, spiritual ‘energy centers’ in the body referred to as *chakras*.

Our daily routine included the study of various religious writings, like the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Vedas* (ancient Hindu Scriptures). Then there was participation in nightly yoga classes taught by others in the ashram for the local community.

Every waking hour and every activity, even bathing and eating meals, was controlled by a prearranged discipline. We were motivated by the supreme goal of all ashram devotees – our souls (*atman*) blending into oneness with the Oversoul (*Brahman*). We were totally committed to the process.

Peculiar and pleasant things began happening to me: a deep sense of peace, occasional out-of-body excursions into the ‘astral realm,’ vivid spiritual dreams. The suffocating control of the natural realm seemed to be easing its grip and the ‘veil’ of flesh-consciousness, lifting.

A kind of spiritual adrenaline surged through



me daily – the prospect that I was being wrenched free from what my teachers called *maya*, the illusion of this present world. I felt encouraged that transcendent love would prevail for me – that I, in an Adam-like sense, would one day awake out of spiritual sleep to find myself gazing into the face of my Maker. What could be better?

So I followed hard after God, until every waking moment was pulsating with the heartbeat of a sacred quest. I had finally found my purpose. As H. G. Wells said:

*“Religion is the first thing and the last thing, and until a man has found God, or been found by God, he begins at no beginning and works to no end.”*

No longer was I spinning my wheels in the ditch of senseless pursuits. No longer was my time devoted to things that would end when my time ran out in this world.

## **Seized with the Need of Others**

Within a couple of months, something major shifted in my thinking, summed up by Ramakrishna, whose teachings I studied at the time:

“If you fill an earthen vessel with water and set it apart upon a shelf, the water in it will dry up in a few days; but if you place the same vessel immersed in water, it will remain filled as long as it is kept there. Even so is the case of your love for the Lord God ... if you keep your heart immersed always in the ocean of divine love, your heart is sure to remain ever full to overflowing with the water of the divine love.”<sup>6/\*</sup>

“Full to overflowing” – to be full: that spoke of satisfying my own spiritual need of attaining higher levels of consciousness. But to *overflow*: that spoke of satisfying the thirst of others for spiritual truth. Though my initial desire in the ashram was to be *full* myself, day by day I began sensing even greater concern for the parched state of others. I needed to *overflow*.

It would be far more unselfish to focus on helping other seekers, than just seeking my own betterment. Surely, that was ‘the higher calling.’ As these thoughts kept surfacing, I could no longer ignore the plight of a human race draped in spiritual ignorance. I needed to more vigorously help the dawning of a ‘New Age’ (the astrological “Age of Aquarius”: taught to be a time of enlightenment and peace soon to embrace

this planet). So I decided to branch out and start teaching classes on my own.

Feeling strongly compelled, I moved to the thriving city of Tampa, Florida. I had no idea that a major transformation was poised, hovering futuristically in that place, waiting for the perfect moment to manifest.

Four universities in that area (University of South Florida, University of Tampa, Florida Presbyterian, and New College) opened their doors, allowing me to use their facilities for extracurricular classes. Several hundred students began attending. It was amazing. Changing other lives with my changed life: that was a meaningful contribution to others, the continuation of a cycle, the evolution of true spirituality. A number of my students, desiring to devote themselves more completely, requested that I rent a suitable facility and start an ashram. Gladly, I complied.

One night during that time, I experienced a major spiritual breakthrough: what some seekers describe as 'absorption into white light.' I had the distinct impression that my soul exited my body and was drawn into a very intense and

timeless radiance. Though now I have a different interpretation of what really happened during the phenomenon, it seemed I was passing into the highest state of meditation. More assured than ever that I was truly on my path, I intensified my efforts. I had to abide there continuously, in a state of constant illumination.

Then something unexpected happened! A divine appointment interrupted what had become a predictable pattern of life. I wasn't even seeking for new direction, but God knew my heart. He knew my love for Him and my sincerity of purpose. So He intervened for me miraculously through several ...

## **Divinely Orchestrated Events**

Three key happenings took place within a few weeks that caused the most important turning point in my life. First, the *Tampa Tribune* newspaper published a half-page interview with me. The reporter questioned me concerning my beliefs as a teacher of Kundalini Yoga and reported what I was doing in the Tampa area. I was thankful for the exposure, certain this free publicity would increase the attendance in my classes.

*Little did I know that it would also alert a local Christian prayer group to begin praying for me!*

They cut the article out of the paper, pinned it to their prayer board, alerted their 24-hour prayer chain, and assigned someone to be fasting and praying for me every hour of every day until my conversion took place. I have since learned that God does nothing in this world except in response to prayer. I am so thankful for those who sought God in my behalf.

The second pivotal happening came in the form of a letter. Several weeks after the article appeared, I received a letter from a college friend who left school the same time I did to seek for ultimate truth, but he went to study under a different guru. The content of Larry's letter was quite a surprise. It described an abrupt change that had just taken place in his life.

Though he had been devoted to yoga and meditation, something had radically altered his whole approach to the things of God. Larry excitedly shared how he had walked into a church and heard an audible voice say, "Jesus is

the only way!” At the same time, the Holy Spirit fell on him and he claimed he was “born again” (spiritually transformed by an infilling of God’s presence – John 3:3).

Being unfamiliar with this Biblical expression, I assumed it was just a Christian term synonymous with what Buddhists call *Nirvana*, Hindus call *Samadhi* or New Agers call *Christ consciousness*. But Larry insisted that this was different.

The Hinduism-based, New Age view I embraced maintained that a latent ‘spark of divinity’ exists *within* all human beings that must be ‘awakened’ to achieve God consciousness (a supposed flash of revelation that we *are* God).

The Biblical view, on the other hand, explains that, because of our corrupted state, God is separate from us, and that spiritual rebirth comes only when we are washed clean from our sin in the blood of Jesus. Then the Spirit of God enters into our hearts from *without*. At that point, we are brought into true oneness with God. (See Isaiah 59:2.)

Larry’s words were emphatic, “Mike, you’ll never find ultimate peace through yoga and

meditation. You have to go through the cross. You have to be spiritually reborn. Jesus really is the way to eternal life.”

I wrote my college friend back, explaining that I was happy he'd found the path of Christianity to be right for him. However, I also confided that some of Christianity's claims seemed illogical to me, and that it was far too exclusive – making it a ‘lesser path,’ an immature religious mindset.

“All religions are different paths to the same God,” I countered. Strangely, though, I could not get Larry's letter off my mind. His words kept echoing inside of me, even though their logic escaped me.

After a couple of weeks, I decided I needed to deal with this issue. Dismissing Christianity without fully exploring its claims would be unfair – unfair to me and unfair to the One who claimed to be the Savior of the world. I realized I had never really given Jesus an opportunity to prove Himself.

So I concluded, “If He really was who He claimed to be, and if I don't test His teachings, I might miss the very thing I've searched for so

passionately. Besides, if Jesus allowed Himself to be crucified for the salvation of the human race, I owe it to Him to at least open my heart to the possibility of His claims being true.”

So one morning, though it involved quite an inward struggle, instead of following my usual yoga routine, I decided to ...

## **Dedicate One Day to Jesus**

I got up about 3:15 in the morning. That was our normal time of rising in the ashram. We spent the first hour doing various postures and breathing exercises. Then from 4:30 to 6:30 we would sit cross-legged and motionless, in what is called the “lotus position,” doing various kinds of meditation. Usually we practiced Mantra Yoga. That pivotal morning, though, I decided to break away from the ordinary.

Leaving the other devotees meditating in the living room of my ashram, I went into a back room by myself and sat down. Though it seemed spiritually incorrect, I prayerfully dedicated the entire day to this One Larry claimed was the only “*Mediator between God and men*” – the only



One who could bring me back into oneness with the Everlasting Father (1 Timothy 2:5).

Quite often during the day I prayerfully confessed faith-statements like:

*“Lord JESUS, I commit this day to You. I believe, if You are real and if You’re the Savior of the world, You will show me today.”*

After seeking God for a lengthy period, I began reading the Bible, spending most of my time immersed in the Gospel of John and the book of the Revelation. I was especially stirred by the latter, with its powerful, prophetic visions, especially those verses foretelling that final conflict between the forces of good and evil at a battleground in Israel called Armageddon. Even back in 1970 I could see foreshadowings of the cataclysmic events that are soon to unfold.

I sought God fervently the entire day, fully expecting some kind of powerful, supernatural visitation (a vision, an audible voice). However, I have since discovered that God does things His own way, in His own timing. Later that afternoon, right when I was about to give up and dismiss the claims that Jesus really was the

“Messiah,” God intervened, and I arrived at my ...

## **Moment of Destiny!**

Kent Sullivan was a senior at the University of South Florida. He was an accomplished student, but his educational pursuits had not brought him the lasting answers or peace of mind he desired. A few months before, he had been following the teachings of Yogananda, a well-known Indian guru who authored the widely read book, *Autobiography of a Yogi* (which I had read several times myself). Abruptly, though, Kent had switched from Kriya Yoga to Christianity.

Though I'd never met Kent personally, I was well aware of his unexpected 'conversion.' It was the talk of the town among those involved in yoga and meditation. Many of us were stunned, wondering how he could make such an illogical choice. He was recognized as one of the most advanced students of yoga in the Tampa area. We mused, "How could he opt for the idea that Jesus is the only path to salvation? How could anyone who truly understands the concept of all religions being one ever depart from it?" Of course, as I pondered these things, I had no idea that ...

*Kent belonged to the very prayer group that was praying for me.*

That divinely appointed day, Kent decided to wash his dirty clothes. He had a free hour in between classes. It was a perfect time to take care of a boring, yet necessary task. Carrying an armful of clothes, he got about halfway through the door of the laundromat when the Spirit of God spoke to his spirit saying, “Don’t go in there. I have something else for you to do. Get back in your van and drive where I lead you.”

It seemed impractical and illogical. Besides, being a new Christian, Kent was not used to having his plans interrupted by the Holy Spirit. He submitted to God’s design, though, thinking it quite peculiar. Of course, he had no idea that about two miles away ...

*The yoga teacher who had been the object of his prayers for about four weeks was hitchhiking, trying to catch a ride to the University of South Florida.*

Even though I had spent the majority of the day focusing prayerfully on the claims of Christianity, I was on my way that afternoon

to conduct one of my yoga classes. (Because I'd renounced ownership of all unnecessary material possessions, I usually had to walk or hitchhike everywhere.) While standing on the side of the road, I was still praying that if Jesus was "the Way," He would reveal Himself.

As Kent drove, the Spirit of God impressed him to make several definite turns, eventually leading him down a road behind Busch Gardens. He was still wondering why he was doing this when he noticed me, 'thumbing' for a ride. With long, curly, brown hair, a long beard and loose-fitting Indian-style clothing, I definitely looked the part of a Western devotee to Far Eastern religions.

Kent did not recognize who I was, and he never picked up hitchhikers, but felt curiously 'led' to pull over. As I opened the door, my heart started racing in my chest, because ...

*Taped to the ceiling of Kent's van was a large picture of Jesus.*

I knew this was no mere *coincidence*; it was a *God-incidence*. My mind was charged with anticipation. After a few moments of silence, Kent blurted out, "Friend, can I ask you a question?"

Without hesitation, I responded, “Yes!” He immediately asked, “Have you ever experienced Jesus coming into your heart?” I quickly answered, “No, but when can I? I’ve been praying about the experience all day long.”

Kent’s face broke into a look of surprise. He didn’t expect me to respond so quickly. He offered, “You can come to our prayer meeting tonight.” I replied, “I don’t want to wait for a prayer meeting; I’ve been praying all day. If this is a valid approach to God, I want to experience Jesus right now.” Thrilled over my eagerness, Kent pulled out of the traffic into the first parking lot he could find.

With the van idling, we sat on the floor in back. Carefully, he took me step-by-step through Scripture, explaining the true, Biblical path to God. Then, right when I was on the verge of embracing the Christian approach, my own intellect became ...

## **A Very Difficult Stumbling Block**

A compelling thought gripped my mind. If I was going to be sincere during this time of prayer, I had to first deal with some disturbing

doctrinal issues. One by one, I brought up traditional Christian concepts that were very perplexing or unacceptable to me (like the Bible being absolutely ‘God’s inspired Word’). With each question or comment Kent would calmly reassure me with the words, “Don’t worry about that. Just try Jesus!” As I pinpointed certain Far Eastern or New Age beliefs I felt I could never give up (like reincarnation), Kent kept emphasizing:

*“Don’t concern yourself with those things,  
JUST TRY JESUS!”*

Being a former student of yoga himself, Kent understood my apprehension. He could relate to the protectiveness I felt toward my belief system. He showed tremendous wisdom. He knew that if we got involved in some deep discussion over doctrine, I might turn my heart away from the experience of Jesus altogether (the thing I needed most).

So Kent kept stressing the essential issue: that if I would confess Jesus as Lord of my life and invite Him into my heart, His indwelling presence would establish me in a position of sonship and oneness with the Father. (See Ephesians 3:17, Galatians 4:6.)

Kent understood something I am very convinced of now. It takes a spiritual rebirth before anyone can truly comprehend the mysteries of God's kingdom. Because Jesus is "the truth," once He comes into a person's heart, He sets in motion a process of leading that person, by the Holy Spirit, into all truth. (See John 14:6.) So the most important thing is for seekers to first experience the reality of Jesus' personal presence. Then they can far more easily sort out all the related truths that surround this central theme of true Christianity. It's not RELIGION, it's RELATIONSHIP – a huge difference!

Kent finally persuaded me. His logic was strong enough to nudge me into the unknown. Besides, I was so hungry to *know* God; temporarily setting my intellect aside wasn't too much to ask.

Just repeating a single petition seemed *far too simple* – but again, I was willing to try. We bowed our heads together and I prayed with as much sincerity as possible:

*“Lord JESUS, come into my heart. I repent of all my sins. Forgive me. Wash me in Your blood. By faith, I receive Your gift of eternal*

*life. Fill me with Your presence. I acknowledge that You died for the sins of the world and that You arose from the dead. I accept You now as Lord of my life.”*

I felt a warm sensation in the deepest part of my heart. It wasn't an overpowering supernatural sensation (these experiences came later), but I knew something dramatic had transpired, different than anything I'd ever known before.

In my younger years, I served as an altar boy in various Catholic churches and attended parochial school. The nuns and priests inspired me with their humility, sincerity and commitment. But still, during that period of deep 'religious' devotion, filled with traditions and ceremonies, I'd never received such a genuine encounter with God. Paul, the apostle, called this experience:

*“... the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.”* (Titus 3:5)

Though I still had many questions, the inner 'knowing' that I had finally been restored to a right relationship with my Creator filled me up. I was confident that if I died, I would spend eternity in heaven.



The peace of God settled like fresh dew on my soul. I was changed and I knew it. God had *generated* a brand new spirit in me and I had truly become ‘a new person.’ The Bible explains at the moment of this transition we become “a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

## A Living Reality

Vietnamese Buddhist, Thich Nhat Hanh, offers, “If we touch the Holy Spirit, we touch God, not as a concept, but as *a living reality*.”<sup>71\*</sup>

This was definitely my mindset as a yoga teacher, and I believe it even more intensely today. However, I now understand that experiencing something supernatural does not always constitute an actual experience of God.

I sincerely thought (similar to Thich Nhat Hanh) that I was experiencing *the living reality* of the Holy Spirit during my yogic disciplines, but after my spiritual rebirth, I realized that was not the case. There is no comparison between encountering a mere impersonal life force and being embraced by the personal, loving presence of the everlasting Father.

For several days following, I announced to my students that I'd finally encountered this longed-for *living reality*. I honestly admitted that I had been wrong in my previous assessment of ultimate reality, that I never experienced the true Spirit of God until I went through Jesus, and that consequently, all of my yoga classes would be canceled. I never could have asserted myself this way if I not received a powerful, supernatural revelation. Though such an abrupt change was quite shocking to my students, many trusted my insights and enthusiastically opened their hearts to Jesus as well.

I closed the ashram and moved to a Christian mission among the poor migrant workers in Central Florida. In the next few months, many hours were spent studying the Bible and praying.

It was a season of welcome and wonderful transition, a very important time of learning to discern the difference between incorrect and correct doctrine. As Plato once said, "God is truth, and light his shadow."<sup>8/\*</sup>

Because the God of heaven was finally overshadowing me with His personal and

gracious influence, the light of truth began to shine more and more with every passing day.

## Flashes of Insight

After my transformation, I was able to look back and see how certain ‘flashes of insight’ prepared me for such a dramatic change. In fact, shortly after receiving Larry’s letter, I was musing over the differences between the Biblical point of view and my New Age belief system when a simple, yet profound thought surfaced in my heart. It was actually a statement made by my former guru, yet ironically, it caused me to totally reevaluate his belief system. I heard the echo of Yogi Bhanjan’s voice insisting:

*“Because Jesus was an AVATAR, He could only speak the TRUTH.”*

It was like someone flipped a spiritual breaker and released a power surge into my spirit, causing it to be flooded with light. I immediately sensed the amazing implications of that one sentence. The word *avatar* stems from Hinduism. It basically means an incarnation of God, or a god, into fleshly form. Certain Hindu sects and

just about all New Agers believe there have been many avatars. According to Christianity, there has only been one.

I thought to myself, “If this is right, if Jesus was an avatar and could *only* speak the truth, then I’d better inspect His words more closely.” To my great surprise, as I studied the sayings of Jesus in the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), I began encountering stunning contradictions between the Biblical revelation of Jesus, and what Yogi Bhanan and other New Age teachers taught about Him. Some of the following conclusions I acquired before my conversion to Christianity. Others came soon afterward. All are essential points.

## **Polytheism or Monotheism?**

All of my gurus and New Age instructors endorsed the existence and worship of multiple gods and goddesses, such as the three primary Hindu deities: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and others like Krishna, Kali, Saraswati and Ganesha. Often there were pictures or statues of these ‘divine beings’ in the yoga studios and ashrams I visited. Being spiritually naïve, I never

questioned their existence. I just assumed they were a legitimate and authentic part of the ‘yoga experience.’ If my teachers upheld their status of ‘godhood,’ then it must be so.

I was somewhat shocked that Jesus (the ‘errorless avatar!’) described devotion to these gods as serious spiritual error. When asked by a scribe to identify the greatest of all Old Testament mandates, He responded:

*“The first of all the commandments is:  
‘HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD,  
THE LORD IS ONE.”*

(Mark 12:29, See Deuteronomy 6:4)

In echoing this Old Testament passage, Jesus was upholding the unyielding Jewish concept of monotheism – the perception that there is only one true God. He is personal (not an impersonal life force), infinite, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, and perfect in all His ways. He dwells in the fullness of His glory in a heavenly sphere, separate from physical creation. Though He manifests within the material world, He is not identified as the essence of life within it.

This short list of God’s basic attributes could

never be applied to the myriads of gods and goddesses in the world's polytheistic religions. Hindu deities have only temporary existences (they are destroyed then reborn at the end of major cyclical ages) and they are far from perfect (human-like frailties and limitations are often ascribed to them).

By quoting Deuteronomy 6:4 Jesus was also validating that entire section of Scripture which also firmly instructs God's people:

*“You shall not go after other gods ....”*  
(Deuteronomy 6:14)

This constraint was previously issued when God, with His fiery finger, wrote Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone. The first two in the list were:

*“You shall have no other gods ... you shall not make yourself a carved image ....”*  
(Exodus 20:3-4)

We know that Jesus was in agreement with these declarations, because He told one man who was aspiring to discipleship to, *“Keep the commandments”* (Matthew 19:17).

Why would these practices be deemed so wrong in the teachings of Jesus? Because false idols and deities are merely mythical entities, created by human imagination, and are misrepresentations of the true character of God. Extending worship to these ‘beings’ is unfruitful, because they do not exist. If God did respond, He would be making very misleading statements about Himself.

As a yoga teacher, I tried to blend Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and other religions into one worldview, but eventually, I realized that doing so was like trying to mix oil and water. Buddha, Guru Nanak (the founder of Sikhism), and Mahavira (founder of Jainism), all taught *against* idolatry and the worship of the myriads of deities in the Hindu pantheon. So how could those worldviews ever be reconciled to the very religion they originally sought to reform? Furthermore, all of these religions promote various concepts about ultimate reality that are not in agreement with Christianity.

## **Isn't There “Only One God”?**

Of course, as a yoga teacher, my initial reaction to this kind of discussion was the often heard

response, “*There is only one God.*” However, as I studied the words of Jesus I realized that this statement means something totally different from a Christ-like or Christian perspective.

When a Hindu says, “*There is only one God,*” he is referring to a cosmic impersonal force called Brahman that supposedly underlies all things. All gods and goddesses emerge from this one universal energy source. So even though many deities are worshipped, the foundational essence is “just one God.” This *all-inclusive* view is foundational to New Age thought.

On the other hand, when Jesus or any of His true followers say, “*There is only one God,*” that statement means one God to the *exclusion* of all others. It is a contention that the true God has a makeup different than all other humanly contrived deities. He is a personal God, not an impersonal force. He is triune in nature: comprised of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, using the correct name for God is essential, since the name applied to Him identifies the interpretation of His nature and determines whether or not He actually responds.



## Jesus' Virgin Birth and Deity

Yogi Bhajan taught that the birth of Jesus resulted from the normal sexual union of a man and a woman, that Jesus was actually an illegitimate child, and that God could never be so personal as to overshadow a virgin and plant a seed of life within her womb. However, the Scripture teaches that Mary “conceived ... of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 1:20). Isaiah even prophesied about eight centuries beforehand that a virgin would bear a child and call His name “Immanuel” meaning *God with us* (Isaiah 7:14).

So this lowly Nazarene was no ordinary man. He was the Son of God. Because of His unique birth, in a far more profound sense than any normal human claiming to be divine, Jesus was “*God ... manifested in the flesh*” (1 Timothy 3:16). When He referred to God as “His Father,” He did not mean it in a general sense – after the natural creation – something that all human beings can claim, but in a unique, powerful and supernatural sense. Jesus even declared, “*He who has seen Me has seen the Father*” (John 14:9).

*“Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him,*

because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God” (John 5:18). This is a crucial point!

## One Way or Many Ways?

My guru also taught that there are many paths that lead to God, but Jesus claimed that there is just one way, just one path that leads to eternal life. In fact, He maintained:

“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved .... ” (John 10:9)

As a yoga teacher, I tried to explain what Jesus *really meant* by that statement – that cultivating His “I AM” consciousness was the door to self-realization, peace and happiness. In other words, seekers must develop an enlightened outlook – the understanding that we are all divine – in order to enter the same level of spirituality Jesus occupied. But that’s not what Jesus said. He was very plain in pointing to Himself *personally* as the portal through which everyone must pass in order to be “saved” (forgiven of sin, delivered from the lower, sinful nature, and transformed supernaturally).

In the verse prior Jesus even asserted, “*All who came before Me are thieves and robbers*” (John 10:8). What an intense statement! That would include Lao Tzu, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster or any other person (actual or mythical) who claimed to be either a divine incarnation or a master teacher leading people to ultimate reality.

I don't think any of these persons (who were actual, living, human beings) intentionally tried to 'steal' a position belonging only to Jesus. Most likely, they were sincere in explaining life and spirituality as they saw it. However, by claiming to teach absolute truth, yet misrepresenting the same, they all 'robbed' Jesus of His rightful place as “*the way, the truth and the life*” (John 14:6). In that same verse He insisted:

“*No one comes to the Father except through Me.*”

Either that was a grandiose claim, totally baseless and egotistical, or Jesus really was who He claimed to be – the Great Teacher, the only begotten Son of God, and the only image of the invisible God in this world. There is no middle ground. One or the other has to be true.

Thankfully, I discovered the latter statement to be the correct one.

## The Importance of the Cross

My guru also taught that Jesus' death on the cross could not redeem anyone from sin; it merely provided an example of obedience, showing each of us how far we should be willing to go in order to fulfill our purpose in this world.

Yet, as Jesus instituted the communion ritual at the Last Supper, He passed a cup of wine among His disciples. Then He gave an extremely profound prophecy:

*“This is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the **remission of sins.**”* (Matthew 26:28, emphasis by author)

It's only logical to think that Jesus would be the final authority on the reason behind His own death. He never implied that it was just a model of surrendering to one's destiny. He plainly stated it was for the purpose of “remitting” sin (which means, not only to cleanse, but to release those who have sinned from any resulting guilt or penalties).

We know Jesus definitely revealed to His disciples, ahead of time, that He would die on a cross (Matthew 16:24; 26:2). If He was prophetically in tune with *how* He would die, certainly He also got it right when He told them *why* He would die.

If this is true (of course, I now contend that it is) the crucifixion of Jesus was and is the most pivotal spiritual event that has ever happened on this planet.

If Jesus' shed blood can actually wash away sin, blotting it out of existence, the concept of karma goes out the window and reincarnation is rendered totally unnecessary. Besides, no other great religious leader died on a cross for all of humanity.

If they had attempted to do so, it would not have been efficacious, because they were all born of the natural conception process and consequently, tainted by the sin nature. On the contrary, only Jesus was "without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Being perfect, in body, soul and spirit, was a necessary prerequisite in order for complete and full atonement to take place for a fallen human race.

## Karma or Forgiveness from God?

Yogi Bhajan taught that there are no accidents. Anything that comes to us – positive or negative – we attract because of things we have done earlier in life or in a previous one. He also explained the key to liberation from the cycle of rebirths is to rid oneself of all negative karma and to live a flawless life (a self-achieved salvation).

Jesus taught an altogether different approach: that through repentance and faith those who come to God can actually be delivered of their past sins. He even taught His disciples to pray:

*“Our Father in heaven ... Forgive us what we have done wrong, as we too have forgiven those who have wronged us.”*

(Matthew 6:9, 12 CJB)

This often-quoted line from this highly revered prayer reinforces the revelation that God is a *personal God* (just as Jesus taught), not an *impersonal force* (as all my New Age teachers taught).

A force doesn't forgive; a person does. The Bible

promises, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to *forgive* our sins and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9, emphasis by author).

At one time I felt that believing in karma caused the blatant inequities that abound in this world to fall into a sensible order. It seemed to answer the heartbreaking disparity between the rich and poor, the healthy and sick, the intelligent and mentally challenged members of the human family. People were simply suffering from errors they had made in a previous life.

However, I now see how illogical this mindset is, since those suffering have no recollection of their misdeeds from another existence, so they cannot identify and change their negative behavior. Moreover, since the punishment they are experiencing is part of their destiny, they should unresistingly submit to it.

If sick persons are taken to a hospital or starving persons are compassionately given food, those who give this assistance are, in a sense, rebelling against the ‘just punishment’ such unfortunate individuals deserve, causing

the karmic retribution to go unpaid, locking them into the pattern of rebirth.

Furthermore, belief that each soul will pass through thousands of incarnations decreases the value of the individual. It also implies that the end of a person is to actually 'lose personhood' altogether, blending in with some kind of 'impersonal' universal force, after the cycle of rebirths is finished.

This was not the stance that Jesus revealed in His teaching. He actually taught that His followers will gather together one day, with Abraham and other Old Testament persons, at something called "the marriage supper of the Lamb" and that His disciples, Peter, James and John, will be appointed to positions of authority in the kingdom to come. (See Matthew 8:11; 19:28.)

If He believed in reincarnation, He instead would have promoted the idea that all these persons would permanently lose their previous earthly identity as they worked from life to life to escape their karmic debt and evolve toward absolute perfection.



## Chanting Mantras or Praying Heartfelt Prayers

Yogi Bhajan taught us to chant mantras in order to ‘burn up’ karma and achieve oneness with God. The primary ones were “OM” (said to be the original ‘sound’ that accompanied the ‘manifestation’ of the universe) or “*Ek Ong Kar, Sat Nam, Siri Wah Guru*” (meaning, “There is one God, truth is His name, and the Spirit is our teacher”).

All the yogic teachers I followed asserted that Jesus spent His hidden years, from twelve to thirty, in the Far East, studying under gurus and masters, learning how to awaken His ‘Christ-potential’ by implementing their yogic disciplines. If that be true, then why did He come back to His homeland, Israel, only to teach against these Far Eastern practices? In His first main sermon He even exhorted,

*“Do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do.”* (Matthew 6:7)

If God is a mere impersonal force, then chanting might make sense. The vibration of a certain incantation could possibly have the power to

direct and control some kind of cosmic energy. But if God on an ultimate level is personal (and I now understand that He is) such methodology doesn't make any sense at all.

God is interested in a loving relationship with us, facilitated and developed by affectionate and worshipful language on our part. He desires an intelligent flow of prayerful, conversational statements from us, not monotonous, droning, repetitive utterances designed to empty the mind and mechanically manipulate some supernatural power to make us more receptive to mystical experiences.

We would never speak to fellow human beings in a mantra-like way – repeating the same phrase thousands of times in order to successfully express our will. Most people are intelligent enough to understand simple sentences the first time around. After that, it would be an insult to their intelligence to repeat ourselves over and over. Certainly the true God is far more intelligent than any of us and even more unresponsive to such an elementary method of communication.

Though Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu, quite familiar with Mantra Yoga, he echoed the Christian writer, John Bunyan, who said:

*“In prayer, it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.”*<sup>9/\*</sup>

Admittedly, mantras, spoken in a dull, lifeless way, are “words without a heart.”

## **Pantheism or Theism?**

One of the most important issues in this list of comparisons concerns pantheism versus theism.

Most New Agers and adherents of Far Eastern religions believe in pantheism (a term meaning “All is God”). It stems from the concept that the universe is not a creation, but an emanation of God – that in the beginning, the Godhead emanated the universe out of ‘Itself’ (in most Far Eastern and New Age worldviews, ultimate reality is an ‘It,’ not a “He” – an impersonal force, not a personal God). Therefore, if pantheism is correct, all things have a divine essence. The universe is really the Godhead veiling Itself in the ‘appearance’ of physical matter. But in reality, the material world is an illusion (Hindus call it *maya*).

On the contrary, theism is the belief that God created the universe, but He exists apart from it. Also, the physical world is real.

Why is this distinction important? If pantheism is right, to experience God, seekers should look within to become one with some dormant divine essence. This is actually the basis of yogic philosophy.

If this were the case, Jesus' final instructions to His disciples would have been completely different. He would have told them to go to the upper room and meditate until the *Kundalini* (the 'Serpent Power') was awakened from *within*. Instead He told them to wait until they were "endued with power from *on high*" (Luke 24:49, emphasis by author). He was speaking of an encounter with an external God, not an internal divine essence. The Bible description of this glorious visitation on the day of Pentecost is truly awe-inspiring:

*And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues,*

*as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit ....*  
(Acts 2:2-4)

Prior to this visitation the disciples of Jesus had never experienced God filling their hearts with His presence; but then, God came *into* them from *without*.

## **Are Human Beings Divine?**

If pantheism is the actual nature of the universe, not only are the trees, flowers and animals an expression of the Divine – all human beings, both evil and good, are expressions of God as well. Believing this produces a serious theological dilemma.

It is the result of an inescapable conclusion: if we attribute divinity to human beings, we must attribute sinfulness to God. He becomes the source of both the good and the evil in the universe, a force made up of both darkness and light (exactly what the yin-yang symbol represents).

Jesus never taught such a concept. He declared to His followers, “Your Father in heaven is perfect,” but that cannot be so if pantheism is

correct (Matthew 5:48). The Scripture also states that, “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). Yet another Biblical passage asserts, “... the Lord is upright ... and there is no unrighteousness in Him” (Psalms 92:15).

These statements can ONLY be correct if theism is the right description of God’s relationship to the universe. If the Creator exists separate from the creation, then the evil in this world cannot be attributed to Him. Instead, evil must stream from other sources: specifically, fallen angels (Satan and his demonic underlings) and fallen human beings, whose nature has been corrupted. Both of these were originally created pure, yet they were given a free will and chose to rebel against God. Through them alone, the world has been contaminated. This is really the only plausible and sensible explanation. Even among Hindus this antithetical idea of pantheism has been a matter of controversy. The famous Hindu teacher Mahdva asserted:

*“It is blasphemous to believe that a perfect God changes Himself into an imperfect creation.”*<sup>10/\*</sup>

## Reincarnation or Resurrection?

My guru also taught reincarnation. Jesus, on the other hand, taught resurrection. He prophetically announced:

*“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life ....”*  
(John 5:28-29)

He verified this truth, setting a pattern in motion, by rising from the dead Himself. He foretold this event to His disciples, saying, *“Because I live, you shall LIVE also”* (John 14:19). But why is physical resurrection necessary?

When I was a yoga teacher I thought it made much more sense that we would eventually evolve into more advanced spiritual beings without physical forms. However, now I see the logic behind this foundational Biblical teaching.

The reason we need a resurrected body concerns our ultimate destiny. According to Jesus’ teaching, those who follow Him will one day inherit the earth, when this world is turned

into a glorious, God-filled paradise once again. So it will be essential for us to have perfected, glorified physical bodies in order to function in a perfected physical world. Those in covenant with the true God are not destined to be formless beings merging into oneness with some omnipresent cosmic force (as I used to teach); we are destined to have an eternal form that is a reflection of the very image of the Most High God Himself.

Strangely, Buddhism teaches that our ultimate end is to become *nothing* (nirvana – cessation of personal existence). Hinduism teaches we become *everything* (blending in with Brahman). But Christianity is altogether different. We will ever be one with God, yet we will simultaneously maintain a unique and separate identity as the sons of God and inheritors of all things in heaven and earth.

Remember, as stated earlier, Jesus validated the Biblical view of resurrection by arising victorious over death Himself. This is something that no other great religious leader can claim, which by itself proves the uniqueness and exclusiveness of Christianity.



## The End of this Age

Jesus foretold that His followers will go through this final physical and spiritual metamorphosis when He returns to the earth at the end of this age. As a yoga student, I was taught that the second coming of Christ is spiritual in nature, that it is fulfilled individually whenever a person attains self-realization, and that it will be fulfilled globally, when the majority of the inhabitants of this orb are awakened to ‘Christ-consciousness,’ realizing their own inherent divinity. Then the ‘scales will tilt’ and a shift in planetary consciousness will result, thrusting us into a new era of enlightenment called “The Age of Aquarius.”

However, there is a huge difference between this concept that stems from astrology and the Biblical viewpoint. Astrological ages only last about 2,200 years, then a new age emerges, then another, then another – a cyclical view of twelve revolving ages that repeat themselves *ad infinitum*. Unfortunately, this does not always mean upward progress. Advanced ages never last. Eventually, the human race always ‘descends’ again into dark periods of spiritual degeneracy, ultimately ending in

destruction from the overload of negative karma. Then, once again, an upward climb ensues. But there is *never any final resolution*. (Incidentally, all the primary Eastern religions – Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Taoism – embrace a cyclical view concerning the future of the universe, yet the details in each worldview vary drastically.)

Jesus prophesied something quite different, that one day He will return, not gradually and spiritually, but bodily and visibly, accompanied by “all His holy angels” (Matthew 25:31). All will “see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,” as He descends to fully establish His Kingdom in this world (Matthew 24:30).

This spectacular return of the Lord will happen in “a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” at the end of this age (1 Corinthians 15:52). When this transpires, we will be ushered into “the Millennial Kingdom”: a thousand years of heaven-on-earth conditions. (See Revelation 20.) Then, at the close of this phase, something even more intense will transpire: the final renovation of all things.

*For ... the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up ... the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire ... Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*  
(2 Peter 3:10-13, See Revelation 20-21)

The most stunning and evident difference between my former beliefs and this Biblical perspective is the fact that this miraculous universal transformation will be permanent. It is not temporary. It is not cyclical. It will endure forever.

## **Is the Bible God's Inspired Word?**

If Jesus was an avatar (and again, I propose that He was the only 'avatar' or incarnation of God), and if an avatar can only speak the truth, why did His teachings contradict so many concepts found in Far Eastern religions and New Age spirituality? When I was a yoga devotee, I entertained the idea that the Bible had been corrupted, and that some truly inspired books, supportive of a New Age mindset, were passed

over by ‘authorities’ who wanted to keep that esoteric knowledge suppressed – but what if that is not the case? What if the books in question were really spurious attempts to alter the worldview of the Lord Jesus to fit in comfortably with a Gnostic approach? What if those books are actually the ones misrepresenting His message, not the Bible?

Anyone can do a scholarly study on how our present Bible evolved and see the enormous amount of scrutiny that went into its compilation, and how there are few, mostly minor, differences between the most ancient documents and our modern copies: nothing that changes the essence of the message. If the Gospels are the true accounts of Jesus’ words (the view I wholeheartedly embrace), then any truth seeker should earnestly study them to find out what Jesus actually said.

When I did this, it changed my life. If you dare to do it, it will change yours also. The word *guru* basically means “dispeller of darkness” or “one who brings you out of darkness into light.” If anyone has ever been truly qualified to bear this title and fill this role, it was JESUS. So

borrowing that word from the Eastern culture for a moment, may I suggest that Jesus is the ‘Great Guru’ (the eternal dispeller of darkness) and only that teaching which agrees with His should be embraced. While on earth, He bolstered this idea with the powerful statement:

*“I am the LIGHT OF THE WORLD. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”* (John 8:12, emphasis by author)

There are many false ideas concerning spirituality, masquerading as light, which in the end serve only to darken the minds of seekers. But Jesus is “THE TRUE LIGHT” who “gives light to everyone entering the world” (John 1:9 CJB). The radiance of His great love, shining in your heart and life, will transform you forever.

## **Be Transformed Spiritually!**

Just pray this prayer with all your soul:

*“Lord JESUS, I receive you into my heart as my Savior and Lord. I sincerely repent of all my sins and wrong beliefs. Forgive me according to Your promise.*

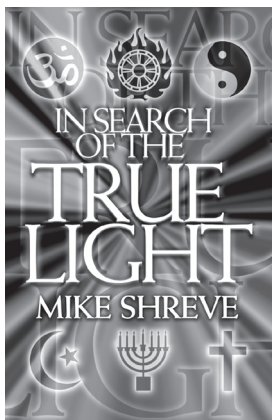
*Wash me in the blood You shed on Calvary. By faith, I receive Your gift of eternal life. I pray You will fill me with Your Holy Spirit, Your goodness and Your love. I acknowledge that You died for the sins of the world and that You arose from the dead to reign forever. I accept You now as Lord of my life and I believe I will spend eternity in Your presence.”*

You don't have to repeat this prayer word-for-word in a mechanical way. Just use it as a guide revealing the correct kind of terminology to use and the right approach to take. Feel free to express yourself creatively and spontaneously. Be sincere with God, reaching out with all your heart, and He will come to you.

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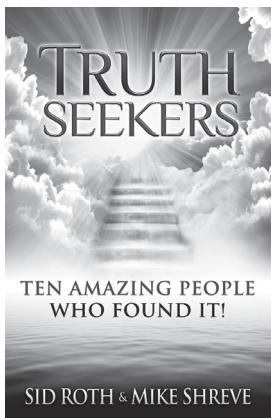


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## Endnotes

- 1 Huston Smith: *The Illustrated World's Religions* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994).
  - 2 [www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/william\\_s\\_burroughs.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/w/william_s_burroughs.html)
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- \* When I quote various persons, such as Surdas, whose belief system is much different than mine, it is not an endorsement of their entire worldview. I am either revealing a belief that I held when I was a yoga teacher, or I am echoing a truth which is universally acceptable and right within a Biblical context as well. I am not suggesting that these persons are reliable sources for the discovery of truth; for that, we turn to the Bible.



The Highest Adventure  
ENCOUNTERING

# GOD



*Sketch of Mike Shreve / 1970*

**Mike Shreve** was a college freshman when a near-death experience dramatically shifted his priorities. No longer satisfied with mere temporal things, he embarked on a quest to discover ultimate truth – becoming a devotee of an Indian guru and eventually teaching Kundalini Yoga at four universities in Tampa, Florida. Then a powerful encounter with the TRUE GOD changed everything!

Since 1971 Mike Shreve has traveled worldwide sharing transformational insights that bring healing to the whole person. He is the author of eleven books, best known for an in-depth comparison of over 20 religions titled *In Search of the True Light*.



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