



ARTICLE

Gnostic Tendencies

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Answering the question: What do Madonna, Pat Robertson, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Mary Baker Eddy, and The Beatles have in common?

Learn to despise this world of outward things, and devote yourself to what lies within... Christ is ready to come to you, with what kindness in his glance! But you must make room, deep in your heart, to entertain him as he deserves; it is for the inward eye, all the splendour and beauty of him; deep in your heart is where he likes to be... Up with you, then faithful soul, get your heart ready for the coming of this true Lover, or he will never consent to come and make his dwelling in you... If you love Jesus, if you love the truth, if you really direct your gaze inwards, and rid yourself of uncontrolled affections, then you can turn to God at will, lifted out of yourself by an impulse of the spirit, and rest in him contentedly.

Thomas a' Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, 1429

...A Christian is a Christian because he is rightly related to Christ; but 'he that is spiritual' is spiritual because he is rightly related to the Spirit... The human, at best, could be no more than the channel, or instrument, for the divine outflow... It is one of the supreme glories of this age that the child of God and citizen of heaven may live a

superhuman life, in harmony with his heavenly calling, by an unbroken walk in the Spirit. The leading of the Spirit is not experienced by all in whom the Spirit dwells...A Spirit-filled Christian [is distinguished] by actualizing into celestial heart-ecstasy that which has been taken by faith concerning the positions and possessions in Christ...It follows, therefore, that true leading, in this dispensation, will be more by an inner consciousness than by outward signs.

Lewis Sperry Chafer, *He That Is Spiritual*, 1918

God is foolishly in love with us; it seems that He has forgotten heaven and earth and happiness and deity; His entire business seems to be with me alone, to give me everything to comfort me.

...Know then that God is bound to act, to pour Himself out [into thee] as soon as ever He shall find thee ready...It is one flash the being ready and the pouring in: the instant spirit is ready, God enters without hesitation or delay. Thou needest not seek Him here or there, He is no further off than the door of thy heart; there He stands lingering, awaiting whoever is ready to open and let him in.

Meister Eckhart, *Sermons*, 1311

We should strive to reach the Horeb height where God is revealed; and the cornerstone of all spiritual building is purity. The baptism of Spirit, washing the body of all the impurities of flesh, signifies that the pure in heart see God and are approaching Spiritual Life and its demonstration.

Mary Baker Eddy, *Science & Health*, 1915

Listen to Jesus' words: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" ([Mt 5:8](#)). Check this closely, because too many read this text to mean, "Everybody who's perfect will arrive in heaven someday." But Jesus wasn't talking about purity in ritual terms. He was talking about the fundamental definition: *Purity* is "that which is undiluted by other substances." Now, join that to the place Jesus pointed at, to the *heart* of a man—*that's* where God seeks undiluted commitment.

So what does it all mean? The answer is in what Jesus did and didn't say. He didn't say, "Blessed are the pure in mouth...hands...mind...feet." No Christ calls you and me to come, candidly and with a *heart fully opened* in worship, into the privacy of His

presence. Then something will happen: If we bring our whole heart, without restriction or reservation, we will see God!

That, my brother, doesn't mean you or I will have a phantasmic vision of heaven or see fleecy clouds with angels flying. It means we will become candidates for seeing God's nature take over our lives... *We will see God*. It's the privilege of the purified, not earned by accomplished holiness but realized through the total devotion of a man's heart at worship.

Jack Hayford, *Seven Promises Of A Promise Keeper*, 1994

Those who fast with pure motives will be drawn closer to the great heart of God and experience a quality of life in the Spirit that is not possible apart from fasting.

Bill Bright, *The Coming Revival*, 1995

Faith is deep in your spirit. But it's got to "come up" out of your being and go to God in order for it to work for you.

Oral Roberts, *Attack Your Lack*, 1985

Without going out of my door, I can know all things on Earth. Without looking out of my window, I can know the ways of Heaven. The further one travels, the less one knows...the less one really knows.

The Beatles, *The Inner Light*, 1968

God knows all things. There are wonderful times when He shares a bit of His knowledge—a "word of knowledge" as the Apostle Paul called it—with His people. This is intelligence that comes from God without reliance on sight, sound, taste, touch, or smell.

Pat Robertson, *Beyond Reason*, 1985

Today is the last day that I am using words. They've gone out, lost their meaning, don't function anymore. Traveling, leaving logic and reason. Traveling, to the arms of unconsciousness. Let's get unconscious honey, let's get unconscious. Words are useless, especially sentences. They don't stand for anything. How could they explain how I feel?

Madonna, *Bedtime Stories*, 1994

The issue God cares about is the direction of the heart, not the content of theology....Christians in the West need to become less materialistic and more spiritually Buddha-like.

Clark Pinnock, *A Wideness In God's Mercy*, 1992

Many people find it difficult to believe in Christianity. They picture Christianity as a creed, concerning which they have to decide whether or not it is credible...Let us put the case bluntly. Christianity is primarily something to be done. It is not first of all a finished set of propositions and doctrines to be accepted; it is first of all an unfinished task to be completed...Every element in Jesus' teaching is livable. It can be tried out in life and it works in practice. Inner fellowship with God in the shrine of the spirit, and faith in the victory of righteousness—that is livable. Then let us not over-excite ourselves over controversial doctrinal points. Instead of asking, 'Is it credible?', let us ask, 'Can we ever in this world make Christianity come true?'

Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Secret of Victorious Living*, 1934

Because spirituality is generated from within the individual, inner motivation is crucial. We believe that mere outward form does not constitute spirituality.

...In recent years we have begun to shift the focus of our attention away from doctrine with its focus on propositional truth in favor of a renewed interest in what constitutes the uniquely evangelical vision of spirituality. Corresponding to this trend is a growing attempt to reformulate our evangelical self-consciousness away from the creed-based conceptions of the recent past toward an understanding based on the piety that lies deep in the broader evangelical heritage.

Stanley J. Grenz, *Revisioning Evangelical Theology*, 1993

Christianity is not founded on dogmas. True Christianity is based on only two instructions: Love God with all your heart, soul, and intelligence; and love every other being as your own self.

Spyros Sathi (New Age Thinker), *Common Boundary*, 1995

The Gospel is no theoretical system of doctrine or philosophy of the universe. Rather, by treating of life eternal it teaches us how to lead our lives aright...Jesus never spoke of any other kind of 'creed,' for he meant for us to confess our faith not in doctrines but by

feeling and action. How great a departure from what Jesus thought is involved in putting a creed in the forefront of the Gospel, and in teaching that before a man can approach it he must learn to think rightly about Christ.

Adolf von Harnack (Pioneer of German Liberalism), *What Is Christianity*, 1900

Christianity is not a system of human philosophy nor a religious ritual nor a code of moral ethics—it is the impartation of divine life through Christ.

Chuck Swindoll, *Growing Strong In The Seasons Of Life*, 1983

You need to realize that you are not a spiritual schizophrenic—half-God and half-Satan—you are all-God. The problem area is not in your spirit; it lies in your mind and body.

Kenneth Copeland, *Believer's Voice of Victory*, 1982

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