

# Worldviews

## Apologetics Resource Center Newsletter

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SPRING  
2023

### What is Falun Gong?

By Rev. Clete Hux

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#### Founder & Background

Falun Gong was founded in 1992 in the city of Changchun, Northeast China, by Li Hongzhi, who combined some elements from Qigong with poses of Thai dance. Eventually Li claimed that Falun Gong was his innovation from millions of years ago which he had imparted to the people living on several previous worlds.

It is significant to note that Li claims a spiritual authority greater than that of Mohammed, Buddha, and Jesus. Although it is reported that Li claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus Christ, he has said that a "supreme being" commissioned him to come to earth and save humanity from its corrupted morals and from the technological evils of science.<sup>1</sup>

"At the beginning, Li Hongzhi claimed that Falun Gong practice would keep practitioners free of disease and he held classes to teach Falun Gong to his followers and "cured illness" through his "own energy and power". However, in that process, things went inevitably wrong, since his "patients" were persuaded not to go for any medical treatments, while being "cured" by Li himself. As a result, many of his patients died. In order to get out of trouble, Li soon gave up "curing" illness through his "own energy and power". He began to ask his followers to learn his theory instead, which, as he put it, could cure their illness and help them escape from mortality and fly to a place what he described as "heaven". Of course, every follower was supposed to buy his books and attend classes accordingly. From this business, he accumulated a huge amount of money and

became a millionaire. To say the least, Li amassed \$5.4 million through publication of Falun Gong materials and tax evasion." (<http://lv.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/>)<sup>2</sup>

The Chinese government's first crackdown occurred after the group's April 25, 1999 sit-in protest at a government compound in Beijing. When more than 10,000 arrived, Communist leaders took more steps to monitor Falun Gong followers and keep their activities under control. A few months later, the government announced a ban on the practice of Falun Gong because it believed its followers promoted superstitious and evil thinking.<sup>3</sup> Treatment of the group by the Chinese government has been seen as inhumane and has caused quite a stir among international human rights lawyers. Some point back to what they call a similar situation in the 1936 Olympics held in Berlin, Germany, when the world stood by and allowed the Games to take place in spite of common knowledge of Nazi practices. They would say history has repeated itself. Amnesty International reports that in the months leading up to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing that there was a renewed attack on Falun Gong showing that state security was determined to crush any domestic opposition. Amnesty detailed numerous arrests and the harassment of Chinese civil rights activists. The U.S. State Department has estimated that at least 100,000 Falun Gong members have been imprisoned, locked up in psychiatric hospitals, or sent to "re-education" camps, where they are made to denounce their founder.<sup>4</sup>

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The prophet Micah told his readers that God requires of us, “To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8b) But what does this simple statement mean? The first thing to note is that there are three component parts of the statement. In this essay I would like to focus on the first two. To start, **what does it mean that God requires that we act justly?** What it means is pretty simple. It means we are to abide by his law in our relationships with one another. The second half of the Ten Commandments deals with these requirements. Namely, we should honor all of our relationships and refrain from murder, theft, and lying as we deal with other people. Finally, we should be content with ourselves and refrain from coveting the possessions of others. To promote justice, God ordained government to penalize and punish those who would violate others. This ordination is limited to specific crimes, as God has reserved for himself the task of final judgment and punishment.

**Second, we are to love mercy.** The Bible argues that all people have failed to live in complete accord with God’s law, but also states that God has been merciful to us in Christ Jesus. In particular, Christ died on the cross as a substitute to atone for the failures of people. Mercy, then, is a matter of God’s sovereign choice and pleasure. Though no one deserves God’s mercy and grace, he nevertheless has chosen to provide it in Christ. It follows that if we love the mercy extended to us by God we will show mercy as a matter of personal volition to others around us. But this raises another question. Are we still showing mercy if we abdicate this responsibility to government? Moreover, can government be the agency of dispensing mercy?

The answer to both questions is a resounding no. The reason why we cannot do this is fairly simple. The government has no inherent resources from which to show mercy. Therefore, in order to act as an agent of mercy it must do so by violating justice. That is, it must use force to acquire the resources from

some people that it will give to others. In this sense it has denied someone’s property rights and participated in moving someone’s [boundary stone](#). This does damage to the very concept of what mercy is.

*Mercy is always a voluntary choice or else it would not be merciful. True charity has always been defined as voluntary sacrifice motivated by love. If someone could force someone else to be merciful to them, it would cease to be mercy.*

Mercy is always a voluntary choice or else it would not be merciful. True charity has always been defined as voluntary sacrifice motivated by love. If someone could force someone else to be merciful to them, it would cease to be mercy. Furthermore, we should be reminded that God chose to have mercy on those upon whom he would have mercy. We are never in any position to demand that God provide it for us as we have all fallen far short of his just requirements.

For quite some time now our nation has been involved in the widespread redistribution of income based on the belief that this action promotes social justice. But is that true? I think that it isn’t. It penalizes hard work, thrift, and motivation in order to reward slothfulness, laziness, and immoral behavior. This is not to say that everyone receiving benefits from these programs are slothful and lazy and immoral; indeed there are many to whom we would want to show mercy. But there is no way for government to define the group that should receive the benefit without allowing those prone to being slothful and lazy and immoral a path to the resources. It is not in the nature of government to have the responsibility to be an agent of mercy. Since government must use force in some form in order to acquire the resources that are needed to show mercy to those in need, it is inherently calling the good (the protection of private property) evil, and the evil (the violation of private property by force) good. Such a system de-

serves our condemnation.

Some continue to argue for a system of redistribution on the grounds that the poor have fewer opportunities on the basis of one's status at birth. There are certainly inequalities in our lives on this planet. Yet, to argue that this situation is unfair is to accuse the Creator of injustice. God deals with each person as an individual. He has given different abilities, talents, and resources to each of us, yet in no way can you accuse God of being unjust in his sovereign distribution of these talents.

*“Shall the axe boast over him who hews with it, or the saw magnify itself against him who wields it? As if a rod should wield him who lifts it, or as if a staff should lift him who is not wood!” (Isaiah 10:15)*



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### Books by Paul Cleveland

This book clearly lays out the important foundational issues that policy makers either sadly miss or deviously seek to mask. The ideas in this book will more than likely challenge your view of what constitutes good public policy.

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Individual freedom and liberty are fundamental principles upon which a good society is based. The notion that paradise on earth can be achieved by coercive means has led to the spread of tyranny and despotism. Dr. Clarence B. Carson originally explained this truth in his 1978 book, *The World in the Grip of an Idea*.

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Perennial Wisdom, also known as the Perennial Philosophy, the Perennial Tradition, or even the Wisdom Tradition, is a belief surfacing in the church although rarely under that name. Perennial Wisdom infiltrates through other practices such as Contemplative Spirituality and the Enneagram, both of which stem from the influence of Richard Rohr (b. 1943) and his followers. Rohr, a Roman Catholic Franciscan friar and the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a self-avowed follower of Perennial Wisdom and does not hide it.

## The Basics

The term *Perennial Philosophy* first appeared around 1540 from the Italian humanist Agostino Steuco, and later by German mathematician and philosopher G.W. Leibniz in the 18th century. In the 20th century, a major spokesperson for the Perennial Philosophy was the Swiss-born Frithjof Schuon (1907-1998), a prolific writer on metaphysics, spirituality, art, and anthropology. Perennial Wisdom was popularized through the writer Aldous Huxley whose book, *The Perennial Philosophy*, was published in 1945. So what is the Perennial Philosophy? Several descriptions yielded this concise overview from a Perennial site at <https://tinyurl.com/2sur73kw>:

*1. All life arises in and is an expression of the nondual Infinite Life that is called by many names: Ultimate Reality, God, Tao, Mother, Allah, YHVH, Dharmakaya, Brahman, and Great Spirit among others.*

*2. You contain two ways of knowing the world: a greater knowing (called Atman, Soul, Self, Spirit, Mind, etc.) that intuitively knows each finite life as a unique manifestation of Infinite Life, and a lesser knowing (called self, ego, ahem, kibr, etc.) that mistakes uniqueness for sepa-*

*rateness, and imagines itself apart from rather than a part of Infinite Life.*

*3. Awakening the greater Self and knowing the interconnectedness of all life in the singular Life carries with it a universal ethic calling the awakened to cultivate compassion and justice toward all beings.*

*4. Awakening your greater Self and living this ethic is the highest goal you can set for yourself.*

Not all followers of Perennial Wisdom would organize the above points in that order or even those categories, and would possibly modify it, but the points presented above appear basic to the Perennial Wisdom view and serve as convenient points for discussion. More on the four points are below beginning under the heading "Panentheism."

## Followers of Perennial Wisdom

Perennial followers are found worldwide. There are two main types of Perennial wisdom, one is evolutionary, believing that humanity is evolving, and the other is not evolutionary (*Credit goes to Dr. Ronald V. Huggins for this information, and other insight he has given me on this topic*).

This is not an academic article, so those two views and other finer points of Perennial Wisdom are not addressed in this article. Only an attempt to explain the main ideas, including those promoted by Richard Rohr and some others, are given and answered here.

Perennial Wisdom is different from the idea that truth is found in all religions, which is broad and can be applied to different beliefs. Although Perennial



followers would agree with that statement, their views go far beyond that sentiment. According to followers of the Perennial belief, the exoteric (outer) aspects of religions make religions appear to differ from each other, but the esoteric (inner) truth binds all religions together in the same core reality. All religions come from the same root or source in the Perennial view and are united in the same core truth.

**Followers of Perennial Wisdom do not, however, advocate a global faith or a uniting of all religions. They believe that the same thread of wisdom runs through all religions, and therefore, all religions share and eventually lead to the same core truth and Divine Reality. Consequently, all could find the Perennial truths via their own faith tradition through an inward journey (mysticism). The inner journey via mystical practices is the bridge that leads one to the truth that unites these religions.**

Terms such as "Divine Reality" and "the Divine" refer to God, though this god is not usually referred to in personal terms. The first of the four points given above expresses this idea.

Followers of Perennial Wisdom tend to continue in a traditional religion and may call themselves followers of the *Hindu tradition*, the *Buddhist tradition*, the *Christian tradition*, etc. The word *wisdom* may also be included, as in the *Christian wisdom tradition*. Christianity, for example, is viewed as only one of many wisdom traditions. [This article focuses on Christian Perennial followers.](#)

## The Contemplative Aspect

The term *contemplative* in this context refers to advocating certain practices that involve techniques such as following one's breath, repeating a word or words, imaginative prayer, and/or other techniques designed to bring one into a state of (non-thinking) awareness of the Divine and union with the Divine. This

may go under the names prayer, meditation, centering, contemplative prayer, or other terms.

These practices are allegedly based on (what are called) the desert fathers and mothers, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and the Centering Prayer Movement started by now deceased Trappist monks Thomas Keating (d. 2018), Basil Pennington (d. 2005), and William Menninger (d. 2021). The Centering Movement also incorporated Hindu and Buddhist meditation techniques. (See CANA article on Contemplative Prayer for more information at

<http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles/ContemplativePrayer1.html>

Richard Rohr is an enthusiastic promoter of Contemplative techniques and speaks admiringly of Thomas Keating. This contemplative aspect is significant because followers of Perennial Wisdom believe mysticism is the door through which one journeys toward realization of Perennial truth. Therefore, contemplative practices are strongly advocated and often include a variety of techniques.

**Perennial Wisdom emphasizes the inner journey as necessary, and doctrine is secondary or even extraneous.** As David G. Benner (b. 1947), a Master Teacher of Rohr's Living School, puts it:

*The Christian wisdom tradition is not a set of beliefs to be embraced but a transformational path to be walked (From Preface to Living Wisdom; Wipf & Stock, Second edition, 2019).*

To read more about Benner and this

book, see CANA article on Benner's book at [http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles\\_LivingWisdom.aspx](http://www.christiananswersforthenewage.org/Articles_LivingWisdom.aspx).

## Panentheism

**The first of the four points** given in the first section above speaks of all life as *an expression of the nondual life*, meaning God (God has various names). All creation, including the earth, stars, animals, rivers, plants, rocks, and humans, arise from the nondual divine Source and contain the divine Source. As Richard Rohr puts it, everything and everyone has *divine DNA*.

*This view is panentheism, a belief that all contains God. It is not pantheism, which is the view that identifies God as the same as creation, usually stated as all is God.*

Panentheism effectively erases the biblical distinction between God and creation (though its advocates may try to refute that). In truth, since God created the universe from nothing, God cannot be part of what he created. God's omnipresence does not entail God being part of his creation; it merely expresses the reality that God cannot be contained anywhere. Therefore, God is present everywhere. The omnipresence of God is not panentheism.

Panentheism ties God into creation. This view of God denies biblical attributes of God such as his non-dependence (non-contingency) on anything; his immutability (God does not change (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17)); his existence outside of time; and his Divine Simplicity (God has no parts/divisions) versus the dipolar panentheistic god who is in creation and transcends it. (To learn more about panentheism, see John W Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers, From Plato to the Pre-*

*sent*; Baker Academic, 2006).

All Perennial Philosophy followers are therefore necessarily panentheists. Richard Rohr openly admits belief in panentheism and supports it as an historic Christian belief, although it is not.

## The Greater Knowing

**The second point** in the list is about everyone having a *greater knowing* versus a lesser knowing from what is called the *ego*, which is the false self. The *greater knowing* is allegedly an intuitive knowledge of the Perennial truth but the person may not have had a conscious realization of this truth.

The Perennial Wisdom follower believes that the conscious rational mind of the ego causes one to mistakenly believe that he or she is separate from the Infinite (God). This false sense of separation gives rise to supposed wrong teachings about God and humanity. **For example, the Christian Perennialist rejects the teaching that Jesus atoned for sins on the cross as necessary.** The Perennialist would posit that the ego mind has blocked realization of the Perennial truth through this atonement doctrine and the person needs an awakening through contemplative practices to get past it. In fact, Rohr has called contemplation a process of *unlearning*.

Rohr denies the atonement for sins or the need for forgiveness since all are already "in" Christ. Like any Perennialist, Rohr also denies God's wrath on sin. Since the Perennial god is a part of creation and more impersonal, there is no Perennial concept of God's righteousness. Without righteousness, God is lowered to a human standard of what is good or

just, which, of course, is heavily flawed, relative, and in the end, meaningless. And since the Perennialist denies God's wrath, then sin is not an issue.

## The Greater Self and Justice

**Point 3:** *Awakening the greater Self and knowing the interconnectedness of all life in the singular Life carries with it a universal ethic calling the awakened to cultivate compassion and justice toward all beings.*

**Point 4:** *Awakening your greater Self and living this ethic is the highest goal you can set for yourself.*

The third and fourth points are about the greater Self, also known as the True Self. This greater Self must awaken, and then the Self will recognize all life as part of the nondual Infinite. A call to compassion and justice is inherent in this awakening, but compassion and justice are based on human ideals, not based on the character of God or on anything expressed as a standard in the Bible.

Such a calling for man to conform to standards from non-Christian spirituality or secular ideals becomes a calling to whatever ideals are currently popular. Whether it is embracing polytheism, same sex marriage, or a gender fluid society as ideal, these become the basis for a call to *compassion and justice*. In contrast, Psalm 89:14 and other passages tell us that justice is from God and based on his character:

***Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before You.***

Other passages (Ps. 37:30; Prov. 2:9, 8:20, 21:3, 15) link justice with righteousness, such as:

***The exercise of justice is joy for the righteous, But terror to those who practice injustice.*** Proverbs 21:15

***How blessed are those who maintain justice, Who practice righteousness at all times!*** Psalm 106:3

Righteousness is the character of God that no man can attain on his own, but it is the standard. Righteousness was imputed to those in the Old Testament through faith in the true God (Romans 3:21, 4:13), and the righteousness of Christ is imputed to those who believe in him as the Son of God who died to pay the penalty for man's sins on the cross (Romans 1:17, 3:22, 4:5, 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

The Perennialists who call themselves Christians, or say they are followers/practitioners of the Christian tradition or of Christian wisdom, like Richard Rohr and David G. Benner, do not refer to God's righteousness because salvation from sins is not an issue in the Perennial view. The crucial goal is to awaken to the Greater or True Self, which is already part of Divine Reality, according to Perennial philosophy. The righteousness of God is neglected by or unknown to Perennial Wisdom adherents.

Without a foundation in the character of God for righteousness, there is no absolute standard for justice, and justice becomes relative. It is impossible in Perennial wisdom to know this righteousness and justice because Perennial beliefs reject or ignore God's attributes as revealed in God's word, as are the moral standards based on God's revealed character in Scripture.

## The True Self

Richard Rohr teaches that the True Self of the Enneagram has never been separated from God. The Enneagram is designed to uncover this Greater Self through realizing that the nine Types are temporary constructs of the self.

David G. Benner teaches about this True Self in the popular book, *The Gift of Being Yourself* (IVP, 2019), although he calls it the *Christ-self* and the *Christ-in-me self* and asserts that we must *recognize Christ as the deepest truth of our being* (p. 99). He adds:

*It is not just becoming like Christ but actualizing the Christ who is in us. It is a journey toward union with God* (p. 99).

Since Benner's book has a Christian publisher, Christian readers may overlook this statement or misinterpret it to mean living out the Christian life according to Scripture. But *actualizing the Christ* is a specific concept foreign to the Bible. It is a psychological term Carl Jung used about living out an archetype that is supposedly within humanity's collective (shared) unconscious. Benner is saying that we actualize this Christ as part of a journey toward union with God. It is not about relying on Christ for forgiveness of sins and eternal life. This Perennial belief gives the True Self priority over the historical Jesus.

Benner offers Jesus as an example of one who (supposedly) struggled with *false selves* as he searched for his true identity (pp. 72; 85). This not only demeans Jesus but ignores the fact that Jesus knew who he was. The accounts of Jesus at age 12 in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52) and of facing Satan in the wilderness temptations (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13) demonstrate clearly that Jesus did know who he was. It is not the biblical Jesus that Benner writes about despite the popularity of this book on Christian campuses and in Christian counseling.

The so-called True Self should not be mistaken for the new self or regenerated self in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). The new self in Christ is born from above (John 3:3, 15) via a supernatural act from God (John 1:12, 13). It does not exist naturally in man at

birth but comes through faith in the true Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Romans 3:25-28; 4:5, 13; 5:1; Galatians 3:11; and many more). The new self is being conformed to the image of Christ, and not to any other standard.

It is revealing that the Foreword to this book is by Basil Pennington, one of the founders of the Centering Prayer Movement. Connections like this, along with the use of certain terms, have led this writer and others to believe that the Perennial Philosophy is bleeding into the church, at least in part, via contemplative teachers, knowingly or unknowingly.

## The Perennial Gospel

Those Perennial followers who follow what is often called the *Christian tradition* may refer to Jesus and see him as the best example of what they consider to be Christian values or teachings. Richard Rohr has referred to Jesus as an archetype (Rohr adopted archetype ideas from Carl Jung).

As seen in the previous section, David Benner speaks of Christ as more of an archetype in our unconscious than as a Savior, and he does not write about him as a Redeemer from sins. The gospel is not part of the Perennial beliefs and any meaning attached to the gospel falls away as one goes deeper into the Perennial philosophy since it does not consider the gospel to be necessary.

The Perennial rejection of a need for salvation from sins and the false views of Jesus make the Perennial Philosophy incompatible with Christianity. One cannot believe both in Perennial Wisdom and in the gospel as given in Scriptures. **To sum up:**

**The Perennial Christian wisdom tradition is not wisdom from God.**

**The Perennial "Divine Reality" is not the true living God.**



**The Perennial Christ is not salvific and is not the historical, biblical Jesus Christ.**

**The Perennial Philosophy is a false gospel and a spiritual counterfeit to God's truth.**

## The True Jesus Christ

In contrast to Perennial Wisdom, God's revelation is that humanity is innately sinful and born separated from God, desiring to do his will over God's will. Man cannot make up for this on his own, no matter how good, how religious, or how spiritual he tries to be because in his heart, man continues to desire his own will above God's. Change is needed from the inside out, and only God can do this through his grace and power. This happens when one puts his faith in the true Jesus Christ who paid the penalty for sins on the cross.

Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God, uncreated, and the second person of the Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Christ humbled himself to add humanity to his deity in coming to earth (Philippians 2:6-8) and died on the cross to make atonement for sins (Romans 3:24-26, 4:24-25; 1 John 2:2). This was due to God's love for sinners, not due to anything humanity deserved or could earn. Out of God's grace, God transforms the believer and gives him new life in Christ through that person's faith in the true Jesus Christ.

***But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that***

***being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*** Titus 3:4-7 NAS

***But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, even now I say again: if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!*** Galatians 1:8-9

***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*** 2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV



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**Purpose:** This bill provides for tax credits on Alabama Income for individual or business contributions to pregnancy centers and residential maternity facilities who provide resources for women, and do not support abortion in any way. Tax credits may be up to 50% of the individual's state income tax. The total tax credit is \$10 million dollars. The law will sunset after 2028, unless extended. Operative provisions are as follows:

§ 1(b) - Defines an "eligible charitable organization" as one that is IRS tax exempt, an Alabama nonprofit entity, being a pregnancy center or residential maternity facility that has a dedicated phone number, principal physical office in Alabama open a minimum of twenty hours per week, offers services at no cost for the express purpose of providing this assistance to women in order to carry their pregnancy to term, encourages parenting or adoption, prevents abortion, provides healthy child birth, and utilizes

qualified medical professionals for medical procedures.

§ 1(c) - Individuals and businesses may request tax credits against state income tax not to exceed 50% of total state income tax liability, which may be carried forward for five years. A taxpayer may not claim an additional tax deduction for the contribution and may not transfer it to another taxpayer.

§ 1(d)(e) – On Department of Revenue forms, an eligible charitable organization shall provide written certification of its tax exempt status, including that it "does not provide, pay for, refer for, promote or provide coverage of drug induced or surgical abortions and does not financially or otherwise support... affiliate with any other entity that [does]...", that its principal office is in Alabama and 50% of its clients are Alabama residents.

§ 1(i) – The amount of tax credits for a calendar year shall not exceed \$10 million and not more than 50% of total credits may be allocated to a single eligible charitable organization.

§ 1(k) – Tax credits are effective January 1, 2024 through 2028, unless extended.

**Why This Law is Needed:** With the passage of the Alabama Human Life Protection Act in 2019, which went into effect in June 2022 as a result of the *Dobbs* SCOTUS decision permitting states to prohibit abortion, many Alabama women who might otherwise obtain abortions need assistance for themselves, their children and their families as a result of their pregnancy.

Pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes provide these necessities. There are approximately 54 such facilities in Alabama who are providing these services based solely on charitable contributions, without any federal or

state funds. As a result of the AHLPA, these facilities have seen a significant increase in needs for which additional funds are necessary. The public policy of Alabama is to protect women and children. Tax credits for these purposes fulfill that public policy which results in the saving of the lives of many unborn children and meeting the concomitant needs of their mothers and families.

This memo will be provided to legislators and other interested persons. It is helpful during the legislative process to provide succinct information on a bill.



A. Eric Johnston

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[www.southeastlawinstitute.org](http://www.southeastlawinstitute.org)

Here are some of the terms used to dismiss the binary or “twoness”:

- Busting the binaries
- Discovering non-dual reality
- The delusion of duality
- Non-dual spirituality
- Advaita (a Hindu Sanskrit term meaning “no distinctions” or rejecting distinction-making dogma in favor of unifying spirituality).
- Unitive consciousness
- Integral enlightenment
- *Cosmic unity*
- The sacrament of monism
- Non-binary sexuality
- Genderqueer
- Agender.
- Two-Spirit people—a person who identifies as having both a masculine and a feminine spirit.
- Pregnant male

Rachel Levine, presently Assistant Secretary for Health, gives us an example of non-binary speech. In her biography, we read: “while at Tulane, she married fellow medical student Martha Peaslee-Levine, with whom she later had a son and daughter.”<sup>[1]</sup> Hmm. Are you a little lost? There’s a solution to our puzzlement: The “she” who married Martha was originally “he,” known as Richard, who then fathered two children.

How can the difference between “1” and “2” define human culture and personal identity, and help explain the revolutionary times in which we live?

## The Sixties Upheaval

During my youth, something profound was happening in the thinking of a Harvard PhD named Elizabeth Fox-Genovese. Reflecting on the Sixties cultural revolution in which she had participated as a willing student actor, she stated: “Within a remarkably brief period ... has occurred ‘**A cataclysmic transformation of**

**the very nature of our society.**”<sup>[2]</sup> The Merriam Webster dictionary defines a cataclysm as “a momentous and violent event marked by overwhelming upheaval and demolition like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, tornados.” Interestingly, toward the end of her life, this revolutionary student committed herself to Christ.<sup>[3]</sup> What did Fox-Genovese see in the events of the 60s and 70s to justify her intense fear?

I first came to the States in 1964, the same year as the Beatles, and was blown away. The tranquil 1950s had engendered endless Christian television and radio stations, publishing houses, and Christian ministries. There were churches on every corner. As a young European student, I was used to pubs on every corner! I watched with amazement as people gave incorrect change back to the person behind the register. A Ru Paul Drag Race would have been unthinkable to Americans at the time! No one could have imagined drag queen readings for children in libraries or pornography in one’s bedroom at the click of a personal computer. Now “flash mobs” of hundreds of looters rush into stores and steal everything they can get their hands on, grabbing for snacks, drinks, cigarettes, lotto tickets, and expensive merchandise.

I was unaware of the turbulent rumblings that were developing out of the 60s and 70s. Vietnam raged. Nixon resigned in disgrace. In the early 60s, the U.S. Supreme Court banned Bible reading and prayer in public schools. In 1973 it legalized the pre-natal murder of human beings; what we now call “women’s health.” As I sought to understand this revolutionary time, my eyes fell on Romans 1:25, which I had read many times, of course. But that day I realized the profundity of what Paul was affirming—that there are only two worldviews; one that glorifies God and the other that causes God to give

us over to immorality and foolishness.

*they exchanged the truth about God for the lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.*

This verse offers us only two options. One is identified as **the lie** and consists in the worship of creation. The worship of creation rejects the objective reality of the binary, that is, the two distinct realities of God and the creation. The spirituality of Oneism demands that we eliminate the binary in all its forms. The other way of worshipping – that is, to worship the Creator, is identified as **the truth**. I call these two options Oneism and Twoism.

The current frictions we see and feel in our Western cultural are not actually between bigots and progressives or between traditionalists and futurists. The real debate touches the root question of how the world is put together and by whom. If you do not understand the profound worldview conflict that “non-binary versus binary” creates, you will not understand the biblical God, human sexuality, or spirituality.

If you can begin to get a hold on how Oneism and Twoism determine these three areas, you will have a wonderful tool for thinking about our culture and speaking to your friends and neighbors. **Our symposium will dig into these issues, so be sure not to miss it!**

### A Non-Binary God

Progressive theologian, Brian McLaren, once a conservative evangelical, now calls for a new definition of god as “a bigger, non-dualistic, non-binary god.”<sup>[4]</sup> He prefers a god who is “in the story, not outside of time and space like a prime mover or divine watchmaker.”<sup>[5]</sup> McLaren’s god is not different from us; he actually *is* us. The creation is divinized. The non-dualistic god makes no demands on us, of course, and because we are part of him, we can build our own identity. Truth becomes

mere personal power that we attempt to impose on others.

### Non-Binary Sexuality

In the middle of the Sixties Revolution, June Singer published a book with the telling title *Androgyny: Towards a New Sexuality* (1977). Androgyny joins male and female in one person, eliminating the binary. It fits with homosexuality, since both partners get to play both roles. And such a view fits with bi-sexuality and transgenderism, both of which, in some sense, attempt to allow a person to be both genders. In all cases, the non-binary is affirmed, whereas in the Bible male and female are kept clearly distinct, symbolizing the distinction between God and creation. Singer states her Oneism clearly:

*The archetype of androgyny appears in us as an innate sense of...and witness to...the primordial cosmic unity—that is, it is the sacrament of monism [or Oneism], functioning to erase distinction...this was “nearly totally expunged from the Judeo-Christian tradition... and a patriarchal God-image.”<sup>[6]</sup>*

### Non-Binary Spirituality

The Sixties was also the time of the invasion of Eastern pagan spirituality that took over the West, described by sociologists as equal in effect to the Christian Great Awakenings of the 18th century. Christine Chandler, a Western, academically trained psychotherapist, describes her experience as a disciple of Tibetan Buddhism, practicing Mindfulness meditation for hours each day for thirty years.<sup>[7]</sup> She came to believe that “the world is just an illusion.” Eventually, “the self and the other must be destroyed” via the “esoteric logic of non-duality” or “non-binary,” or Advaita.

Even before the non-binary terminology arose, June Singer wrote of androgyny:



*We will need to perform our own new alchemical opus...the great work, [a term from satanist traditions] to fuse the opposites within us: the archetype of androgyny, the great work of normalizing pagan sexuality, is the ultimate goal of identity politics, namely a spiritual but satanic path towards idolatrous self-transcendence.*

One is reminded of the goal of the occultic satanist founder of *Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn*, Aleister Crowley:<sup>[8]</sup>

*...the great work is, before all things, the creation of man by himself, that is to say, the full and entire conquest of his faculties and his future; it is especially the perfect emancipation of his will.*<sup>[9]</sup>

The great work is the ultimate goal of identity politics, namely a spiritual path towards self-transcendence, that is, independence from any notion of a Creator. Indeed, as politics becomes more all-inclusive it becomes more religious, claiming to answer all the human aspirations, physical and spiritual, to usher in a better world.

To this seductive but false cosmology of paganism our culture is being “given over.” We need to understand what happens to a culture that, in the name of moral inclusiveness, is systematically brain-washed into eliminating the binary notion of God and creation, right and wrong and male and female. Since there is no dependable knowledge of God, we will also lose any notion of who we are.

Fox Genovese understood a generation before it happened what the cataclysm would be. She saw that Western culture had been shattered by an invasion of both ancient eastern pagan spirituality and pre-Christian sexual license. These changes would transform a world influenced for a millennium and a half by Western Christian traditions, a world based on the revealed divine logos,

creating a civilization of intelligence and artistic beauty, scientific research and biblical spirituality and morality—a world we now learn to be rejected as “white supremacy” and to be replaced by neo-Marxist identity politics. This is catastrophic.

Our symposium is timely. There is hope that people will hear the gospel and turn to their Creator and Redeemer before it is too late.

[1] [Rachel Levine | National Women's History Museum](https://www.womenshistory.org/biographies/rachel-lev...)  
<https://www.womenshistory.org/biographies/rachel-lev...>

[2] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Women and the Future of the Family* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 17.

[3] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Women and the Future of the Family* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000).

[4] Brian McLaren, *The Great Spiritual Migration* (New York: Convergent, 2016), 103.

[5] McLaren, *Spiritual Migration*, 222.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Christine Chandler, *Enthralled: The Guru Cult of Tibetan Buddhism* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017), 36–37.

[8] Crowley appears on the jacket of the Beatles' *Sargent Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*.

[9] Lévi, Éliphas, *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual*. Translated by Arthur Edward Waite (London: Rider, 1968), quoted in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Work](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Work).

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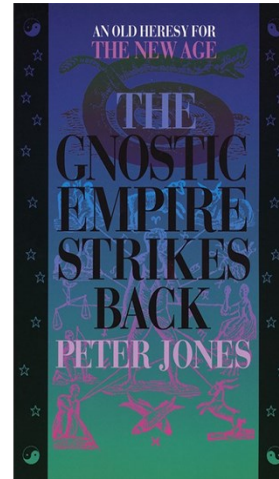
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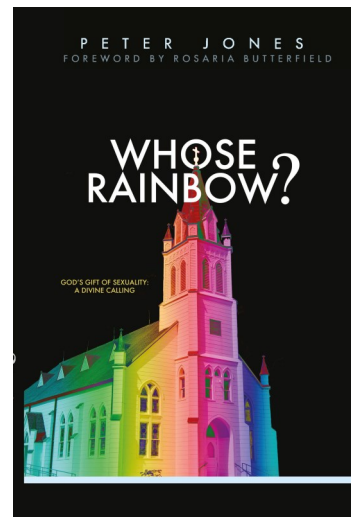
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### **Continued from Page 1:**

Included as followers of Falun Gong are both the poor and educated, some even members of the Communist Party, all who believe that communism is destroying any hope in Chinese culture. Those who practice Falun Gong claim they are not interested in politics; they just want to practice their religion and be recognized as a legitimate religious group.

There is much more that can be said about Chinese communism and the government's mistreatment of those seeking to exercise religious freedom. This is especially true of Falun Gong, but such abuse is only one purpose of this article. Although some have heard of the situation in China, most are not familiar with what Falun Gong really is. Identifying the beliefs and practices will be the overall objective of what follows.

### **Defining Falun Gong**

Falun (*fa* meaning "law;" *lun* meaning "wheel") Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, was introduced publicly as a form of *qigong* (pronounced *chee* or *key* – gong), by its founder Li Hongzhi in 1992. One study says that *qigong* first appeared during the Great Cultural Revolution of the 1960's and has been growing in popularity ever since. Although modern in name, *qigong* reportedly represents forms of cultivation (personal spiritual discipline) practices from ancient Buddhist and Taoist history.<sup>5</sup>

The ancient oriental practices of *qigong*, being a form of Taoism, seek to combine personal discipline (morality, meditation, and breathing exercises) with attainment of spiritual energy or life force know as *Qi*. Such cultivation or practice is the oriental method of attaining the Buddhahood and/or the Tao, and is considered the ultimate achievement of personal self-realization. The Tao is an indigenous Chinese name for deity.<sup>6</sup> One could say that this is the goal of Falun Gong's practitioners.

### **Beliefs and Practices**

Clearly a movement with spiritual practices,

Falun Gong and its founder would rather the world see them as just people who love to do physical exercise. "We are ordinary members of society.... It's only that we get up early to do our exercises."<sup>7</sup> But through such exercises the dedicated student of Falun Gong is supposedly able to achieve a state of selflessness, greater insight and awareness, inner purity, and balance. These are steps to spiritual enlightenment or "attaining the Tao."

The very serious practitioners of Falun Gong seek to tap into the life force *qi* which helps move them toward enlightenment. Followers do this by cultivating the *falun* or "law wheel" within their bodies. This "law wheel" is believed to be a miniature replica of the universe itself, spinning in synchronization with the universe and absorbing universal energy while purging the body of its bad elements. Through cultivating one's mind and body, Li's disciples have access to this inner *falun* which is said to be located in one's lower abdomen and psychic center of the body. Successful cultivation of mind and body bring them in line with *Zhen-Shan-Ren* (Truthfulness-Compassion-Forbearance) which is said to be "the supreme nature of the universe."<sup>8</sup>

The best way to accomplish all this, according to Li, is for his disciples to see him as their master who protects and cares for them. He claims that he has the power to implant the *falun* in his followers, eliminate their diseases, purge their spirits of the evil karma so prevalent in the world (which he sees as a dumping site for the garbage of the cosmos), and unleash their potential for a new kind of energy. Falun Gong's claims for benefiting its followers range from reversing the aging process and being healed of chron-

ic illness to supernatural abilities such as seeing through matter with a “third eye.”<sup>9</sup>

### Should Christians Be Concerned?

Yes, definitely! Christians should especially be concerned because of the undiscerning spiritual appetites of our contemporaries. The influx of Eastern mysticism into Western culture for the last several decades has caused a previously Judeo-Christian civilization to grow increasingly accepting of mystical religions such as Buddhism and Taoism. These Eastern religions share a monistic (all is one) worldview, which is totally different from a theistic (Creator distinct from creation) worldview (see Gen. 1:1).

Like age-old Gnosticism which taught that secret wisdom could be attained that leads to salvation, Falun Gong teaches, as do other Eastern spiritual disciplines, that one can attain the Tao (deity) by tapping into the *Qi* energy via the “law wheel”. Obviously, in such a worldview, there is no place for the personal Creator God of the Bible or for the atoning work of Christ. When you have a movement whose founder expects his followers to see him as their unquestioned master, you are looking at issues of mind-control. As Christians, we know there is one master, the Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 4:1 and Acts 2:36) and He has no equals.

While Christians should reject the tyranny of communism and should sympathize with people who are oppressed, and should strive for equality, human rights, and freedom of religion, we must also recognize that all worldviews are not equally valid. We should honor human dignity, but not at the cost of truth. Our concern may best be translated into action by being prepared to intelligently articulate the truth of Christianity with gentleness and respect to those we encounter from various backgrounds. Doing that, however, requires that we have some

knowledge of other belief systems, just as cross-cultural missionaries prepare when they go to another part of the world. This is the opportunity that lies before us.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> David Rennie, “10,000 Cult Followers Join Demo in Beijing,” Daily Telegraph (May 7, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> (<http://lv.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/>)

<sup>3</sup> “China Bans Meditation Group after Massive Protest,” CNN Interactive (22 July 1999) accessed at <http://cnn.com/WORLD/asiapcf/9907/22/china.protest.02.ap/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> Michael Sheridan, “Yu Zhon dies as China launches pre-Olympic purge of Falun Gong,” TIMESONLINE (April 20, 2008) accessed at <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/china/article3779899>.

<sup>5</sup> Authors Frank Tian and Tracey Zhu paper, “Ancient Wisdom for Modern Predicaments: The Truth, Deceit, and Issues Surrounding Falun Gong,” (paper presented to the American Family Foundation Conference, Oct. 17-18, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Hutcheon, “The Man China Fears Most,” Sydney Morning Herald (May 7, 1999) accessed at <http://www.smh.com.au/news/9905/07/text/features1.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Hutcheon, “The Man China Fears Most.”

<sup>8</sup> From the Falun Dafa web site <https://en.falundafa.org/>

<sup>9</sup> “The Power of the ‘Force,’” Newsweek, International Edition (May 10, 1999) accessed at <https://www.newsweek.com/power-force-166736>



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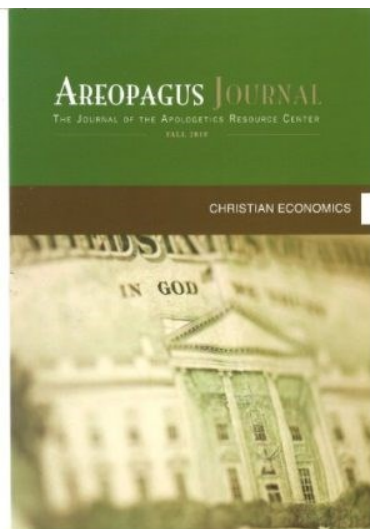
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