



Books in Review

RUNNING AGAINST THE WIND

by Brian Flynn

Lighthouse Trails Publishing, 206 pages, \$12.95

This book's Foreword calls it "a personal and transparent account of God's sovereign grace, delivering a man who had given himself over to the demonic world of the occult. After Brian became a born-again Christian, much to his shock and dismay, he found within the evangelical church the very practices that had characterized his life in the New Age."

Flynn summarizes astrology, Ouija boards, channeling, auras, Transcendental Meditation (TM), reincarnation, monism, yoga, human potential movement, visualization, guided imagery, Reiki (therapeutic touch), witchcraft, goddess worship, crystal healing, Shamanism, labyrinths, contemplative prayer, the emerging church movement, Neale Donald Walsch (*Conversations With God*), Richard Foster (*Celebration of Discipline*), Marianne Williamson (*A Course in Miracles*), Brennan Manning (*The Ragamuffin Gospel*), Thomas Merton, and Tilden Edwards. An index provides for quick information retrieval and a brief glossary offers definitions of a few key terms.

Flynn tells how he acquired his spirit guides. The account may seem strange to those unfamiliar or unaware of this practice, but a former astrologer-turned-Christian confirmed its accuracy. She said Flynn's experience was similar to hers and standard procedure for many who attempt to "pick up" spirit guides. The origin of this mechanism is widely debated. Some argue it is the product of the human imagination. Others say it is fully demonic. Others see it as a combination of both. It certainly is a real experience to the recipient and used by Satan to further the kingdom of darkness.

The only negative aspect of the book is that the author could have spared readers some detail about some aspects of his former sinful lifestyle.

Also a small correction which needs to be made in future printings is where contemporary medium and best-selling author John Edward (of *Crossing Over* fame) is identified as John Edwards (pg. 115).

Flynn explains the difference between healthy imagination and visualization and guided imagery. The occult form of visualization employs mental pictures of desired outcomes in an attempt to bring them into existence and thereby play God. This New Age technique attempts to change or create reality and manipulate outcomes. It goes far beyond healthy imagination.

In the chapter titled, "A Trojan Horse in the Church," Flynn targets the contemplative prayer movement, a dangerous mystical practice which has gained wide acceptance within even the mainstream of the Church. Flynn warns, "The similarities between TM and contemplative prayer are quite remarkable. In both disciplines the goal is to achieve silence or that sacred space. With TM the goal is to silence the thoughts so a oneness with the universe can be achieved. In other words, get closer to God or the universal energy that connects us all. The goal of contemplative prayer is also to get closer to *God*" (pg. 162, italic in original). Richard Foster's brand of meditation even moves one into the occult practice of astral projection or out-of-body meditations.

We can hear Flynn's deep passion and concern in some of the closing words of his book:

"When I see the church changing before my eyes and following practices that I left behind, I can only describe the feelings as one of deep betrayal. Some of the very Christians who helped me to see my wretched evilness and need for God, who taught me that these New Age Eastern practices were an anathema to God's teachings, have now opened the door and let the world's ideas breeze in unopposed! How can this be? These are my brothers and sisters. They should be joining me in my opposition, but they do not. I cannot merely stand at the church door blocking these currents of change. I will run full force against them" (pg. 188).

As the modern Church continues to lose ground in its ability to discern and as it accepts more false teaching and methods, books like this one need to receive a wide hearing. Yet, like the prophets of old, gaining that hearing appears to be an insurmountable task. Flynn states, "I would rather be running against the wind of false doctrine than be swept up in the fleeting emotions brought by unbiblical practices" (pg. 189). The Church should desire more such Bereans who are willing to *run against the wind*.

—GRF

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