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Our Mission

Christ centered exercise with a Purpose.

Our Vision

To provide an opportunity for believers and followers of Jesus Christ to exercise and honor God with their body as His temple while growing in the knowledge of the WORD, WORSHIPING Him in spirit and truth and experiencing WELLNESS and spiritual wholeness for the purpose of knowing God and experiencing His presence.

What is 1 COR Word Worship and Wellness?

1 COR word, worship and wellness class is a Christ centered approach to personal health and fitness with a Christ centered purpose. Our purpose is to know his word, worship Him in spirit and truth and honor Him with our bodies. The result is a life of spiritual and physical wellness, in which He is glorified. 1 COR comes from the foundational verse of 1 Corinthians 6:19, which states, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, therefore honor God with your body". It incorporates strength, stability and flexibility through the physical poses originating from yoga as well as stretching and pilates. In this class you will learn how to "Be Still and know that He is God as Psalm 46:10 states, while worshiping him with your body as His temple in a spiritual act of worship as 1 Cor. 6:19 and Romans 12:1-2 command. The class begins with meditating on a scripture verse, which will be the focus of the class. Through the use of Christian music that coincides with the message you will be lead to a place of surrender, adoration and humble worship by exercising both the mind and body while releasing your spirit to experience His presence, and thus worshiping Him in spirit and truth, (John 4:24). During the class the intent is to fill the mind with the word of God, while being challenged with its application to life. The class is completed with a final time of quietness and meditation on the word to allow the Lord to search the heart and speak in the stillness of being in His presence.

One of the greatest things about Christ centered exercise is the unique opportunity to worship the Lord with our entire being physically and mentally while spiritually centering our devotion to Christ alone. Richard Foster in His book, *Celebration of Discipline* states, "worship is to be physical". He goes on to say

"The bible describes worship in physical terms. The root meaning for the Hebrew word we translate worship is "to prostrate". The word bless literally means "to kneel". Thanksgiving refers to "an extension of the hand". Throughout scripture we find a variety of physical postures in connection with worship. Lying Prostrate, standing, kneeling, lifting the hands,

clapping the hands, lifting the head, bowing the head, dancing and wearing sackcloth and ashes. The point is that we are to offer God our bodies as well as the rest of our being. Worship is appropriately physical. We are to present our bodies in a posture consistent with the inner spirit in worship. Standing, clapping, dancing, lifting the hands, lifting the head are postures consistent with the spirit of praise... What we must see here is that the real question in worship is not, "what will meet my needs?" the real question is, "what kind of worship does God call for?" It is clear that God calls for whole hearted worship to be physical and to expect to be cerebral."

My point here with referencing Foster is not to take out of context what he is referring worship to be, my point is that worship can become and is often referred to as being physical in the word when it is pure and done in surrendered praise and submission of mind, body and spirit.

What makes 1 CORbody, Word, Worship and wellness different than Yoga?

1 CORbody was originally created to provide a physical framework to honor God physically while worshipping him in spirit and truth with complete devotion and surrender. It incorporates some of the physical poses of yoga, but it is NOT a yoga class, it is an alternative to yoga. It is designed for people who want to have a physically challenging workout not for the purpose of vanity and infatuation with self and body but for the purpose of honoring God with ones body. What make it a worshipful experience is the opportunity to commit scripture to memory while physically, mentally and spiritually giving Him all that we are where we are; mind, body and spirit. Sometimes we just need a safe place to worship unencumbered and completely abandoned to him. In 2 Samuel 6:14 we read, "David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the Lord *with all of his might*" (NIV, emphasis added). When we worship the Lord it shall reflect our heart. David was humbled by God and was rejoicing after major loss and his body was expressive of his emotions. 1 COR word, worship and wellness class is a safe place to express your worship physically with all of your might by allowing your body to reflect your heart, when was the last time you worshiped with all of your might? Beth Moore in *Anointed, Transformed and Redeemed* says, "I'm never happier or feel healthier than when I am completely caught up spirit, soul and body in praise and adoration of Jesus. To abandon myself completely in worship is the ultimate freedom to me". This happens in this class! You will find yourself in the humble position of a child kneeling at the foot of the cross, or maybe sitting back in chair pose with hands lifted and surrendered to heaven, crying out. "here I am to worship". Your body has the opportunity to reflect your heart and your words, and that is where we find total freedom and complete devotion of praise.

Some may ask why I incorporate the physical poses of yoga, and my answer is because the physical benefits of yoga are proven and sound and I am living proof. I started doing yoga about 10 years ago after a car accident to help relieve back pain, which it did, but it also helped with my overall flexibility and strength and physically I felt so much better and it was long term. I believe the physical poses of yoga are not the danger in yoga; rather it is the spiritual component which the Hindus and easterners believe in and which I completely disagree with! However to say that A Christian cannot benefit from incorporating some of the physical poses of yoga in a workout is limiting the opportunity to experience sound health that comes from a great workout that incorporates strength, flexibility and toning as well heart health and stress management. It really

is just a tool for health, but not “THE TOOL”. God is our ultimate healer, and He is honored when we honor him with our bodies in a Christ Centered approach.

As a Christian we can utilize some of the benefits that the physical poses of yoga provides, while being very intentional about the spiritual component of incorporating our Christian beliefs without letting our guard down to the spiritual dangers of eastern yoga. A Christians approach to exercise should always be to honor God with their body as a spiritual act of worship and when done within the context of learning his word while worshipping him and becoming healthier I believe the Lord is honored and glorified. Learning to be still and quiet is a benefit that yoga can bring however, the reason that we become still is to know him as Psalm 46:10 says, “Be still and know that I am God”. Being still and quiet also allows us to slow down enough to be able to let God search our Hearts and know our anxious thoughts as Psalm 139 says and when we do this we are seeking to know Him and hear his voice, which most honestly we vary rarely intentionally do! We are essentially allowing Him access to our souls and being still long enough to let him speak to us and not just us to Him. We all need a lot more of that in our life!

In Genesis 2 when God created Man He breathed life into Him. I believe the breath is very healing and restorative as it is the source of life and in a sense a reminder of the presence of God moving through our body. So when we take time to breath, move our body in worship to him while committing his word to memory as well as being challenged with the application of it, with a time of stillness, God meets you there, how can He not. He made us spiritual beings, wired to worship him with devotion of mind, body and spirit. Thus when we are able to exercise in such a way that incorporates our entire being God shows up, things happen and lives are changed! Is it because we exercise that we can experience God deeper or because there were stretches and poses that made us feel better physically and emotionally? A resounding NO!!! All we are doing is providing a framework to honor God with our bodies, obeying his word and surrendering to His presence. Our intentions and purpose are to experience God personally, passionately and powerfully and the physical benefits are just an added bonus.

If you incorporate yoga poses, why not call it yoga?

When I first started teaching this class after training from Yahweh yoga, which taught and supported using the term yoga I felt that it was just a word. I thought that if the motives of the heart where pure, which mine where then really the word “yoga” should not be a stumbling block to anyone, it was a physical workout with a Chris centered approach. However after repeatedly being challenged by wise and solid Christian men and women as to the meaning and definition of “Christian yoga” I began to realize my spirit was not at peace when I was trying to defend my stance. I saw myself in a place of defending yoga, when that was not my purpose, my purpose yes was to be able to provide the physical benefits that come with the physical poses of yoga, but most importantly my desire was to lead people to a place of being still before God while worshipping Him passionately, meditating on his word and becoming healthy as a way of honoring God with our bodies as His temple. My purpose was not to teach people yoga. Physically yoga provides a great framework of bringing the mind focused because it is physically demanding just as any sport requires focus. However this workout is unique in that the focus can help to mentally restore the mind and as a result help the body feel better too. As a Christian however we are only restored by the renewing of our minds through GODS WORD. The dangers lie in what we want we want our focus to be. As a Christian our only focus should be that of

bringing our minds and thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10:5. Our spiritual act of worship is physical in that we are his physical temple and therefore we are to honor him with our bodies as living and holy sacrifices, (1 Cor. 6:19). Romans 12 states, We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and not conformed to the patterns of this world and this only happens by knowing His word. Do you see how when we honor God with our bodies, worshiping Him in Spirit and truth and meditating on His word, which is our daily bread, we grow physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally? This is my purpose but it is not the purpose of Eastern Yoga. Yoga as the world understands and knows it seeks nothingness and “nirvana, all seeking many gods as one god as a way to de-stress, thus to call it “Yoga” can be misleading, confusing and inaccurate by definition.

Furthermore I did not want to come under the stigma and umbrella of yoga because in its truest definition, what I am doing is NOT yoga. What makes yoga, yoga is both the physical and the spiritual components of which are completely contradictory to God's word, specifically the first and second commandment, that you should have no other God but the one True God and the second commandment is like it: do not make for yourselves an idol in any form. There is ONE and only One God the creator and sustainer of all life. In eastern yoga the term Namaste is used in concluding a class, which by definition means, “the god in me salutes the god in you”. As a Christian we cannot join in with this because if we confess to believe in One God we cannot turn around and say we salute the god within someone when that god within someone is not the One true God. Likewise the purpose of eastern yoga is to empty the mind and by doing so achieving a greater sense of nirvana or nothingness. As a Christian we are to empty ourselves of the things of this world by the FILLING of God's word and presence. We do not need, or want nothingness, nor strive for it! Rather we want to be filled with the Holy Spirit that comes from prayer, time in his word and walking in obedience to his commands. When a new or seeking Christian hears “Christian Yoga” they may not know the dangers in entering a yoga class and think because they have heard Christians doing yoga that it must be ok. In no way do I ever want to be a stumbling block to any Christian seeking to understand truth, or contribute to anymore confusion in this already confused world. With that being said there is one point for me to clarify. I do teach a sunrise yoga class at a local gym one day a week. The class is completely physically based without any component of eastern yoga and I do not conclude the class with bowing to Namaste. I do it because I enjoy the physical challenge that yoga provides as well the benefits I see in my body. What this means for you, is that if you are looking to attend a yoga class outside of one offered in a church that you know is Christ centered. Please talk to the instructor prior to taking any class to understand their approach and philosophy in teaching. I know of fellow Christian soldiers out there teaching yoga fitness classes but I also know many more who are not! You do not want to be in a class where chanting is introduced and you do not know what to do. Make sure you know what you can expect before you commit.

In all things test the spirit (1Thess. 5:21) and seek God! I am confident that if you are seeking Him and asking for discernment in whether or not you should attend a class, He will show you because He is faithful to protect his sheep and He will not allow you to stray, but you must do your part in seeking Him.