

Are Martial Arts Demonic?

By

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One of the most-asked questions we receive at GMAF is about whether it's a bad thing for Christians to be involved in martial arts. You may also hear similar questions. Here is a portion of a recent e-mail received and our answer.

Q – “Many Christian sources leave no room for a Christian to legitimately participate in any Martial Arts whatsoever, stating that it's all pagan and occult, based on detailed history, philosophical/religious origins, etc... I hear all the arguments against a Christian participating in for example “meditation” which some claim can only be of Satan, since it “does not originate from God...” What is your opinion regarding Chi, or the use of Chi, or in particular Meditation? Is it evil, or can a Christian benefit from meditating to learn to maintain calmness and control over ones self when being attacked by an aggressor (in order to maintain control between your own mind and body, and disrupt control between the aggressors mind and body). And what is your opinion regarding “no mindedness,” that Bruce Lee talked about—is it opening oneself up to demonic influences, by training in Katas, or is it simply training and meditating so that the technique is so ingrained that it comes naturally in response to the attack and

requires no thought to execute? Lastly, what is your opinion about the stories of superhuman strength or actions that are only explained by the power of Chi? Is that a power generated from the earth, via meditation and energy? Or is it Demonic?"

A – I have been down the same path as you. I came to realize martial arts was not something inherently evil. Israel was a martial, warrior nation. Moses was an expert in Egyptian martial arts. He taught the people of Israel to fight as did those leaders who followed Moses. King David asked God to teach his hands to fight and make war. Christ is a Superior Warrior of a form of fighting that is unknown to any martial artist on this planet. We will see what Jesus can do at the Battle of Armageddon.

Chi is simply the “breath of God” that continues life from generation to generation. It is the internal atmosphere which moves blood and other cells to the appropriate location in the body to do the work God designed them to do. Chi is mystical only in the sense it is life from the invisible God of Heaven, but it does not endue humans with super powers.

The Bible speaks of being quiet before God and meditating on His Word. In Genesis 24 we see that Isaac meditated on important issues. God told Joshua to meditate day and night so he would be obedient in obeying God's Word. God promised Joshua prosperity and success in doing so. David wrote in the Psalms about the importance of meditating on God's Word. Paul told Timothy to meditate on things pertaining to his service to God as a minister of the Gospel. Meditation is simply focused thought. We focus on what's important to God and consider His Word to us. It is a combination of thinking about God and speaking to God. That is certainly safe and pleasing to our Lord.

The concept of "no mind" or "emptying the mind" is not the dangerous concept many believe it to be. We empty our minds of extraneous thoughts so we can consider the important things of God unfettered and unhindered. Christians can focus on Scripture and Biblical principles that help them calm their mind and body and prepare for the work to be done. If that work is practicing martial arts, that is a good thing and it will have good results.

Unsaved people are open to demonic influence at all times because of their spiritual condition. Christians are not open in the same way. Demons cannot enter our spirit because the Holy Spirit resides there. However, demons can influence our thoughts and actions and the Bible addresses that situation. God gave human beings more inner strength and mental and physical abilities than we have experienced. We lost much of it when Adam and Eve sinned against God. However, we still have untouched reserves God will allow us to find as we learn how to think and move as He designed us. People are often amazed at what others can do who have given their lives to training in various skills. That's what we do in martial arts. We work at tapping into natural abilities that can surface through dedication, discipline and hard work. Christians who practice martial arts properly and under good supervision do not have to fear the dark side of Satan's kingdom. Demons do control many unsaved people and give them some unusual abilities, but they always lead to the person's destruction unless God saves them. That's not going to happen to a Christian who practices martial arts in a Christian environment. Most Christians are sensitive enough to know when something

they're learning is wrong and that's why so many are leaving secular teachers and looking for Christian instructors. Our desire is to support and encourage Christian martial artists and connect interested students with Christian teachers.

When we practice Kata we are focusing our mind and body on doing the movements well. Excellence in martial arts is like any other art. It takes a lot of technical skill and desire to do it well. We focus our thoughts on what the movements mean in defending against an attacker. Each movement in Kata has several purposes. We unlock Kata for our students so they realize movements include blocking, striking, kicking, holds, locks and throws. The men and women of past generations were willing to spend their lives creating movements which taught an entire system of martial arts in a few forms. They passed on those movements and the knowledge of what the movements contained to a small number of their best students. Today, we are blessed to understand the wealth of information, the deeper curriculum, available in each Kata. We can practice Kata slowly, softly and fluidly for relaxation, flexibility and health. We can practice it fast and hard for strength and endurance. Christians who practice martial arts

properly are usually healthier and able to heal faster after injury or illness.

Christians who practice martial arts develop a system of mind-body connection and whole-body muscle memory that work wonderfully during a real attack. Our mind, body and limbs have become accustomed to quick, balanced, whole body movements that can end an attack quickly and effectively. We emphasize being compassionate while stopping a conflict aimed at us or a victim of crime. We believe that is pleasing to God. Months or years of focused thought, correct movement and enthusiastic practice prepare us for that moment when our skills are needed for defense.

The martial arts system I teach was brought to the United States by a Chinese Christian. Mr. Li used to say it was excellent for health and self defense. Those are the purposes of martial arts: health and self-defense. The purpose of Christian martial arts is to teach people how to have spiritual health and be prepared for spiritual defense. The two go together well.

Thank you for your thoughtful questions. I hope my response has been helpful.

In Christ's Love and Grace,

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