

Who is Henri Nouwen?



So Jesus *isn't* the only way?

Many church leaders have loved reading [Henri Nouwen](#). A little "light" reading today about one of the more influential mystics in the New Age/Emergent Church movement:

Today would like to bring attention to Henri Nouwen, one of the more popular contemplative New Age mystics. He has been popularized by people such as Rick Warren in his book, [The Purpose Driven Life](#) and Francis Chan introducing his readers to Nouwen in, *Crazy Love*. (to site just 2 promoters, facilitators of Nouwen.)

In his book, *In the Name of Jesus*, Henri Nouwen said, "Through the discipline of contemplative prayer, Christian leaders have to listen to the voice of love...For Christian leadership to be truly fruitful in the future, a movement from the moral to the mystical is required." (1989)

It's obvious now that Christian leadership have taken Nouwen's 'exhortation' and ran with it in the last few years. His intentions have been realized across Christendom. In this year of 2011, Nouwen is just another accepted household name. It's known now that anyone can get away with throwing in someone like a Henri Nouwen alongside C.H. Spurgeon, or any other Reformed voice and get away with it. It's called being a facilitator for the 'New Spirituality', this global transformation that we are now in, the one world religion, which is coming together faster than I can type this article. Are you a Christian or Christ-Follower? (See article about the difference in, [How to "Discipline" Yourself Right into the Global One World Church](#))

With all the, "Oh, I've found a new author that I'm in love with", that people go on and on about, who is Henri Nouwen and just why is he so popular not only with the new-neo- Calvinist crowd but all across the board? We can find Nouwen being quoted from Catholics, to [New Agers](#) to the big names in the Reformed camp, doesn't matter who, all are in love with Nouwen. As said many times on this blog, know your mystics, know your monks and know why they are being pushed by everyone and their brother. (for instance why not familiarize yourself with any name that is quoted in any book that you read or a name from the pulpit that is dropped-who are they and what DO they want, where ARE they taking me?)

I find it interesting that Nouwen is introduced so often as a passing quote. This to me says that he is being used as a way of introduction into mysticism. I have yet to see someone that reads one of these books that promote Nouwen, that lo and behold -it's a miracle!- all of a sudden , they list Nouwen, after reading these books, as now one of their favorite authors. Well now that works quite nicely, doesn't it?

So, who was Henri Nouwen? What did he believe? You are just about to find out through the sources provided.

~Traveling with Henri Nouwen~

It was Nouwen's intent to make mystical prayer a pervasive paradigm within all traditions of Christianity. He felt the evangelical church had many admirable qualities but lacked one vital one: mysticism. He sought to remedy this by imploring, "It is to this silence [[contemplative prayer](#)] that we all are called."

For Nouwen it was very disturbing to him when he heard people say that Jesus was the only way. He said it was his mission to help people find his or her own way to God (see *Sabbatical Journey*). That's also why he saw India as a source for many spiritual "treasures" for the Christian.

Nouwen and others such as [Thomas Merton](#), use Jesus as a simply a model, because they see Him as a model for higher consciousness rather than the unique Son of God, Emmanuel (God with us) who came to die for us and be our Savior. And that's what you find across the board in contemplative writings.

Henri Nouwen himself promoted Thomas Merton, Taoist Philosopher Chvang Tzu, the writings of the Desert Fathers, [Teilhard de Chardin](#) (Catholic priest who believed Jesus would not return in person but rather as a cosmic Christ), and Hindu Spiritual Writer Eknath Eswaran.

[Source:](#)

<http://www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com/nouwen.htm>

Ray Yungen writes:

“Nouwen’s endorsement of a book by Hindu spiritual teacher Eknath Easwaran, teaching mantra meditation, further illustrates his universalistic sympathies. On the back cover, Nouwen stated, “This book has helped me a great deal.”

Nouwen also wrote the foreword to a book that mixes Christianity with Hindu spirituality, in which he says:

“[T]he author shows a wonderful openness to the gifts of Buddhism, Hinduism and Moslem religion. He discovers their great wisdom for the spiritual life of the Christian ... Ryan [the author] went to India to learn from spiritual traditions other than his own. He brought home many treasures and offers them to us in the book.”

Nouwen apparently took these approaches seriously himself. In his book, [The Way of the Heart](#), he advised his readers:

“The quiet repetition of a single word can help us to descend with the mind into the heart ... This way of simple prayer ... opens us to God’s active presence.”

But what God’s “active presence” taught him, unfortunately, stood more in line with classic Hinduism than classic evangelical Christianity.

from [“Henri Nouwen and Buddhism”](#)

by Ray Yungen (Excerpt from *A Time of Departing*, 2nd ed.).

[http://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/nouwenbuddhism.h
tm](http://www.lighthouse Trailsresearch.com/nouwenbuddhism.htm)

****Below have provided additional links for further research:

[Who Is Henri Nouwen?](#)

[What Did Henri Nouwen Really Believe?](#) (info that Nouwen believed that he was a homosexual)

[Henri Nouwen and Buddhism](#)

[HENRI NOUWEN SAYS...](#)

[THE INNER JOURNEY TO APOSTASY WITH HENRI NOUWEN](#)

[HENRI NOUWEN HELPED BY "MEDITATION"](#)

[HENRI NOUWEN: GOD IN THE INNER SANCTUARY OF EACH HUMAN BEING](#)

[The Dangers of Spiritual Formation and Spiritual Disciplines: A Critique of Dallas Willard and The Spirit of the Disciplines](#)

[Donald Whitney, Mysticism and Spirituality without Boundaries](#)

via thereformedtraveler.wordpress.com