

**Christian Meditations and Prayers**

**by**

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## CHRISTIAN MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS

### **Abstract**

The current paper evaluates the impact of Christian Meditations (CM) and Prayers on physical health and mental health. The subject of research is CM, specifically using two techniques. The first is under a trance, and relaxation messages of healings and prayers are introduced—using a CD, for example, and listening when needed. The second uses a series of relaxing music to visualize and converse with Jesus, God, etc. Existing literature supports the theory that individuals who have experienced Prayer positively affect physical and psychological health. Individuals practicing CM and Prayers are often confused regarding their differences. According to the Bible and tradition, Meditation is not the same as Prayer. Prayers are asking for healing, which may not happen now, and CM allows healing to occur when listening and conversing with God. Christian Meditations and Prayers affect the individual's physical and mental health using spiritual practices. Further research is required to understand the best therapy approaches using CM and Prayers. The author started the research on CM forty years ago and discovered we are not there yet, and the implication on physical and mental health is immense, and research is needed.

*Keywords:* Christian Meditation, Prayer, mental health, physical health, spiritual practices

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### **Introduction**

Every system requires an input to produce an output. If the system is complex, it requires mandatory (positive) negative feedback for stability (Chouery, 2018, 2020). How does someone experience an output file and feedback using God's computer without an input file? Comparable to sitting in front of the TV, a viewer expects to see something without pushing the input buttons or turning it on. Input buttons of the TV are the power button, adjusting the volume and flipping the channels, etc.; that is also input. The feedback is mostly entertainment. About God, the input is faith and believing in Him and His Son; the output is worshiping God, communicating with him, doing His will, and being a good steward to God's creation with contributions. The feedback is God's promise and response to you on Earth and Heaven, and experience life in abundance. Meditation and prayers are also a system where the feedback is from God.

Thus, starting your car's engine is an input, driving is an output, and your destination is the feedback. So, if you accept Jesus to be your Lord and savior, you just started the engine on the road to salvation; next, you need to live what you believe and live the gospel as the output to reach your destiny. You cannot reach your destination without an output, as in driving. When you say we are saved by grace, grace is not a one-time event. It is a constant process given by God, an output, not an input. Grace works in parallel with your output. If you do not have an output, there will be no grace. It means the doctrine of faith; you cannot save yourself; you must have grace from above. It does not come from below.

Faith alone does not work because it is only the input. We read in James 2:17, <sup>17</sup> Thus, faith by itself is dead if it does not have works. It is true because work is an output. I summed the output to communicate with God that you worship as doing His will and good works, participating in the sacraments, etc. There are many ways to communicate with God. Because

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not communicating with God is similar to not believing in Him, eradicating your faith. If you truly believe in God, you will contact or call Him. Then God sends grace from above. This definition works for all religions that believe in God. All religions should work together, making this world a home for everyone.

The Limbic system in the brain is a system that requires input. Dr. Daniel Amen's book "Change your Brain Change your Life" (Amen, 2015) discusses the Social Limbic Prescription. Through Christian meditation, connecting to God as an input to the limbic system is yet to be discovered and needed. Preferably, CM would be taught at a young age. The subject of the research is Christian Meditation in two specific techniques.

The author's interests lie in researching internal and external feedback to the human systems, specifically internal feedback through CM and Prayers. Throughout the preliminary research concerning this topic, the author has come across several terms repeatedly. In taking notes and outlining recurring themes, he has decided on a list of essential concepts that need to be effectively defined for this literature review. Developing a thorough understanding of these terms will be a crucial step in ensuring this research's accuracy. These terms are listed under the definition of terms in the appendix.

### **Discussion**

For the first law of physics (Chouery 2021), everything is unique and contributes. Whether the contribution is small or large, it does not matter to God; He loves all contributions. There are many examples of life contributions, big and small. Everything in the environment contributes. For example, the snow contributes to a beautiful tapestry landscape, streams, rivers, oceans, survival, etc. The importance of the first law of Physics is that God exists; nothing is

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random, and we are created to contribute since we are unique, giving us the foundation of CM and Prayers. The author is studying psychology to contribute by encouraging CM and Prayers.

Here is a law as a corollary to physics' second law (Chouery, 2020): there will be no output if you don't have input. Therefore, if there is no (positive) negative feedback, a person may not be functional to contribute to their environment and enjoy living or have a useful life. To God, it is all about contributions. The input can be internal or external communication using our five senses and our whole being.

A few authors have dedicated substantial research to examining the limbic system through a brain scan. The author chose to focus on author Dr. Daniel Amen. He has specifically looked into the emotional and physical input to the limbic system and the resulting system output, cited and discussed in Dr. Amen's book's following two concerns (2015). First, he discusses what happens to children if the feedback of talking to them or touching or hugging them is removed, and they have no brain stimulus. Second, "Protect Your Children with Limbic Bonding: it has been reported that teenagers who felt loved and connected to their parents had significantly lower incidences of teenage pregnancy, drug use, violence, and suicide."

As discussed in systems by (Chouery 2020), the Limbic System's impact is a physical and mental detriment if there is no input. For example, Schizophrenia is shown on the SPECT scan by Dr. Amen (2015) as a portion of the brain not functioning. Like missing an arm or a leg. You can do nothing about it—medicine functions as an agent to connect the receptacles shown on the scan, and hallucinations decline. Thus, you must take medicine for the rest of your life as the arm or the leg will not grow back. An additional remedy is CM; it allows healing in the brain by visualizing Jesus's Holy Hand on the back of the head (the Hand is all pure and white), and

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slowly, the brain heals with time. It is done while freezing our thoughts. Therefore, the internal feedback becomes the medicine and CM as the spiritual practice.

Another example is dealing with pain. The author had a toothache, and he visualized Jesus' Holy finger on his tooth, and within two days, the pain was gone. He went to the dentist anyway, and she suggested he needed a root canal and told him the tooth was traumatized from a gum surgery twenty years ago. He had a root canal a month later and never had pain during or after the root canal. The internal feedback was CM and the surgery of the root canal.

Schlitz M. (2011) outlined the study area for healing in psychology and medicine. The research shows the interface of science, spirituality, and medicine. Answering: How can science offer insights into these wisdom and spiritual practices? How are they influencing science and medicine leading to health and healing? People may believe that if I pray for you, you will become better, or if you pray for me, I'll become better, yet we know very little of the mechanism. The article clarifies the author's research in a basic outline evidenced in five points: the research's frontier area.

Surveying scientific literature is crucial in creating the author's literature review on CM and Prayers. Criticizing the literature, the author found that studies discussing focus on Prayer exist. Only Chen and VanderWeele (2018) mentioned meditation as meditating on God's word in the traditional sense. However, the author did not find literature on CM related to his spiritual practices or the proposed techniques. The author's research topic is Christian Meditations; the Bible clarifies Prayers and Meditations. Even though Christian Meditation is a form of Prayer, it is not Prayer. In a simple illustration, Meditation allows healing to happen through listening and conversing with God, while Prayer asks for healing and not experiencing healing at that moment. The author also suggested two CM do not resemble prayers. There are gaps in the literature on

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which factors influence Prayer practices. The impact of CM on health presents a gap in the literature. Many mistakenly confuse Prayers with CM and vice versa.

The premises and body of evidence for the argument appear logically sound based on prior research (Bartkowski, Acevedo & Loggerenberg, 2017; Dobrakowski, Blaszkiewicz, & Skalski, 2020; Chen & VanderWeele, 2018; Masters, Emerson & Hooker, 2020; Schlitz, 2011; Walker, 2020). Each of the articles has limitations that lead to future research leaving room for constant additional research. Future research addressing the implications of CM and Prayer healing programs would benefit the world population. Addressing and backing the original study question will help the literature gaps while addressing future research limitations.

Durkheim (1915) showed that cultural practices, belief systems, and the human experience are affected greatly by religion. Our ability to create, envision, imagine, and succeed in otherwise impossible tasks as humans are born in the belief in the supernatural, a higher power, life after death, and the unexplainable. Bartkowski et al.'s (2017) demonstrate a distinct difference in outcomes when leveraging prayer vs. western meditation in diagnosing anxiety and related mental health issues. The work measured anxiety response to three activities – prayer, attending worship service, and western meditation practice – and found that prayer and attendance of Christian worship caused marked decreases in the average subject's anxiety levels. In contrast, western meditation techniques were not a factor in reported anxiety.

The study used data from 1,713 participants. The data had available questionnaires for church members. Findings indicate that shared prayer is often employed in scenarios where an individual seeks relief from anxiety symptoms. Consistent with previous research and Durkheim's (1915) theory outlooks, participation in ongoing worship service reduced anxiety

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symptoms. The study also noted no correlation between traditional western meditation and a reduction in reported anxiety symptoms.

CM Music therapy helps reduce anxiety. The author used a similar CM technique with the same seven relaxation music therapy for twenty-two years. Now he cannot live without doing CM because of the Pavlov (1897/1902) response. His brain is conditioned to hear God and His family in CM music. He craves God all day until he does the CM. His mind is conditioned upon hearing the music, even without visualizing it. The music reminds him of past conversations with Jesus and God.

Chen and VanderWeele (2018) researched associations of religious involvement in adolescence and found that several aspects of health were positively influenced, including physical and mental health, hygiene, resilience, and strength of character. The average age of study participants was 14.74 years old, and depending on the participant, several years to more than a decade of monitoring was performed to obtain accurate results. The Bonferroni correction to correct for multiple-subject testing was leveraged.

Chen and VanderWeele (2018) utilized data obtained in two other related studies, the Nurses' Health Study II (NHSII) and the Growing Up Today Study (GUTS). Health surveys were entered for more than sixteen thousand adolescent participants, and those participants continued to report findings every year when contacted by the research team. Topics reported ranged from the regularity of participating in prayer, mediation, and other religious services.

Compared with abstaining from church services, regular participation was correlated to increased giving back to one's community, pleasure with life, goal attainment, decreased resentment and grudges, and a lesser likelihood of substance abuse and inappropriate intimacy. The conclusion can be drawn that, statistically, regular service participation leads to positive life



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outcomes and provides young adults and children with mentors that positively influence their personal growth. Regular practice of CM may also lead to similar outcomes for young people.

Dobrakowski et al. (2020) studied focused attention meditation (FAM) as a category based on an EEG pattern. Similar to FAM, in certain respects, is prayer. The studies show a possible impact on EEG alpha waves due to transcendence in meditation, understood as full wellbeing; spirituality plays a vital role in maintaining health. Initial research on meditation was fixated and targeted mainly on alpha activity. Significant changes also occur in theta activity, which made some researchers propose that theta is the key brain activity specific to the state of meditation. So far, Christian prayer has very seldom been the subject of EEG investigation. Christian prayer is a wide range of cognitive processes, including attention, memory, decision-making, and planning. FAM shares some attributes that are parallel to prayer.

Study participants in Dobrakowski et al. (2020) who were well-versed in meditation and prayer were selected for the research. They recognized the two largest groups, (14 people) (Buddhist meditators) and (15 people) (Christian meditators), in the Christian-based. Under the conditions, they compared prayer/meditation to targeted peace and found no significant differences between the alpha and theta bands groups. As a result, prayers are similar to western meditation; however, Christian Meditation is not prayer in the author's research.

Masters et al. (2020) compared the effects of Christian devotional prayer (DP) with secular meditation (SM) and habituation control (HC) on cardiovascular reactivity and recovery to an Interpersonal religious challenge. The study goals are to (a) test the effect of DP on cardiovascular reactivity and recovery and (b) Present the Religious Views Interview (RVI) for culturally sensitive stressors for a specific population. Eighty-five Christian undergraduate students at a secular university were randomly assigned to 1 of 3 conditions before engagement

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in the RVI stressor. Multilevel modeling was used to test study hypotheses. Cardiovascular functioning was assessed via activity-stressor differences in systolic blood pressure (SBP), diastolic blood pressure (DBP), and heart rate (HR) measured at the beginning, middle, and end.

Analyses indicated attenuated cardiovascular reactivity for DP compared to both SM and HC. The RVI was a potent laboratory stressor that engaged participants in stressful events. Religiousness predicted dampened cardiovascular reactivity across groups. DP may be an effective dampening response to a potent, religiously based interpersonal stress among Christians. The research showcased the efficacy of religious practice in addressing stress levels associated with heart disease. The experiment relates to the author's research as DP is similar to Christian Meditation except for visualization.

Walker (2020) found that mindfulness meditation effectively treated anxiety stemming from the pressures of their careers. To confirm this, Walker performed interviews with study participants and gained insights into their strategies for dealing with anxiety. Walker found that most of these individuals successfully used mindfulness meditation to deal with stress effectively. The participant's faith in a higher power was correlated to the likelihood that they would leverage meditation. Although the study participants were religious and believed that God was what they utilized in their mindfulness meditation, Walker (2020) found that mindfulness is helping them deal with their profession's stress.

Walker's (2020) study has led to a vast body of work on wellbeing. The results demonstrate that mindfulness meditation techniques and prayer can be effective when individuals need mental health support. Moreover, those that used mindfulness meditation didn't distinguish between their religious practice and their meditation practice – they were the same. They fed off of each other, strengthening the efficacy of the ritual. Adopted broadly across

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society, this hybrid spiritual/religious mediation practice may decrease suicide rates, increase life satisfaction, and make the world more positive and productive. Researching Christian Meditation, not mindfulness, but evidently, the two are intertwined. CM and prayers can use breathing techniques and be in the moment from mindfulness.

As one can see, the results of using CM are limitless and depend on the individual. It is apparent that CM affects physical and mental health and stimulates the brain to solve problems. Jesus helped the author, using CM to solve engineering challenges (Chouery 2016, 2018, 2021), obtained six engineering patents, and composed "Jesus Healing Song." This song is now certified by TuneCore for passing 500 streams. The author composed the song while an angel helped select the guitar's chords. Music therapy CM allows spending time in peace and dialog with Christ to solve a problem.

Sternberg & Halpern (2020) outlined the importance of critical thinking. One cannot call news fake without critical thought. CM and Prayers allow for sorting out information, critically thinking with Jesus, and resolving anxiety. The information above regarding potential spiritual practice characteristics can serve as a vehicle to achieve the desired health outcome. The limitations and gaps in the current literature provide suggestions for further improvement. The author's conclusion is CM and Prayer work, and recent literature supports this fact. His mental health improvement is strong evidence CM and Prayers are successful. He may still need to take medication; He has not had an episode in over thirty-one years. Using CM and Prayers, his life is moving on suitably rather than being in a suffering state.

The author's research implications for the academic field are looking at the universe and its content as a system. The human system has an input definition, output definition, and feedback loop. The feedback can be internal and external as well. The literature review will

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provide a collective assessment of information related to Prayer. The author's research will contribute to the academic field by serving as a resource demonstrating the knowledge gathered thus far. Through a compilation of numerous relevant articles not cited above, the review will provide a comprehensive discussion of work that has already been accomplished and work that is still required. Suggestions for future research can help fill gaps in our current understanding of this topic as CM is separate from Prayers. In doing so, we can better understand providing physical and mental health to the patient.

### **Conclusion**

Without a doubt, the central claim of using the two proposed spiritual practices gives results for internal therapy. The author has been alleviated so many times by the sensation of living water in his body. This sensation can happen to anybody. Living water is defined in the Bible, which Jesus gives. Future research would try to measure living water in the laboratory. But it will be difficult to know what is from God and what is biological. The question is, why does it matter? The topic is using CM and Prayers for physical and mental health using two spiritual practices. The first is under a trance, and relaxation messages of healings and prayers are introduced—using a CD, for example, and listening when needed. The second uses a series of relaxing music to visualize and converse with Jesus, God, etc. There can be more spiritual practices besides these two internal therapies, which are traditional and recommended. Such as walking or singing in nature gives peace.

As outlined as techniques in the book (Chouery 2016), they need to be researched and become part of psychology. The topic is significant since only a handful of research has been accomplished. It will take some time for new experiments and reach 5% probable for the null hypothesis. Most of the experimentation would be between-group design. If the two groups are

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compared using random assignment alone, the researcher will analyze the data using a technique called the independent-samples t-test. If the two groups are compared using matching, the researcher will analyze the data using a dependent-samples t-test (Schweigert 2012). Ever since Freud, concentration was the external feedback, and it took years to develop with the advent of cognitive behavior therapy. The internal feedback is still in its infancy, and the tools the author presents are significant. He proposes separating psychology into external feedback, such as counseling, and internal feedback, such as CM and Prayers. However, the task is to offer new proven techniques to be used by patients. For example, developing a guided CM with new music to heal cancer will take time and many trials in research. It is important to portray religion as science because God is a matter of science and psychology, not just faith (Chouery 2018). God put laws in the universe; He will not change them for a person, and finally, we are a created species that need feedback, physical and spiritual, per God's second law of physics.

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### Appendix

#### Definition of terms

- Jesus Christ: The invisible God made visible in Jesus Christ (New Living Translation, 2015, Colossians 1:15-20). Jesus becomes an agent of life and health mediator in CM and Prayers.
- Pavlov Response (Pavlov 1902): Happens in craving God in CM music therapy meditation.
- Deep CM: a meditation that requires relaxation or hypnosis or a trance before meditation starts (Chouery 2016, 2018)
- Mother Mary: Mother of Jesus and partner in His ministry. (New Living Translation, 2015, Acts of the Apostles 1:14)
- There are no steps to get to God or Heaven: Christianity (a way of life and a relationship) is not a religion since there are no steps to get to God. All necessary is baptism, believing in Jesus, and communicating with God (McWhirter, 2008). Jesus asks us to be baptized with water and believe His blood will erase our sins and have eternal life. The baptism will erase the genetically inherited sin of the death of Adam and Eve (Chouery 2021).
- Apostle of Christ or God: A person has a direct mission assigned by Jesus or God through vision or belief or lived at Jesus' time. (Chouery 2016)
- The Bible: A book was written by people who walk with God; they enlighten God's world. The Bible is proof of God's involvement in human history and encompasses the word of God. Thus, God exists, and the story does not end; it continues. The Bible

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- is a central document used to help people throughout history and has affected people's lives in the trillions. The Bible is not made to bind us; it sets us free (Chouery 2021).
- Living Water: This is a sensation in the body of healing. As mentioned in Bible, the early apostles had Living Water to protect them from the disease on their journeys (New Living Translation, 2015, Acts 28). Also, it is recorded in Christian history the apostle John could not be poisoned by his enemies (Orthodox Church in America 2021).
  - Music Therapy in CM: Listening to peaceful music while visualizing God and His family (Chouery 2016, 2018)
  - Alma Mater: The anthem of the author's school (College Patriarchal) in Ethics and Virtue before Education and Science. This identity is very needed in the world, especially in social media.

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