

“Is Reiki Occultic?”

Dr. Michael Gleghorn



I recently pulled up your website when a friend of mine told me she has a counseling center that practices Reiki. Wondering what Reiki was, I began to search it out. Despite all the Christian voices that support it, I refuse to buy into it, and I feel it is the Holy Spirit working in me. I emailed my friend and told her of my concerns. One of her responses was, “In my mind healing is ultimately the result of God’s love, whether it is a doctor doing a heart transplant or a Reiki master transmitting love through themselves.” She feels it is “God’s action occurring in and through people.”

Is it the work of God to transport some energy through our hands to someone else? Doesn’t sound right. What it all sounds like to me is an occult type practice that people have tried to squeeze into a Christian box and it’s not quite fitting!

Thanks for your letter. I’m assuming you’ve already read my article on Reiki, but if not, here is a link to it: www.probe.org/reiki/.

I begin the article by briefly considering what Reiki is. I then look at whether or not there is scientific support for Reiki. I consider the success claims of Reiki, ask whether Christians should be concerned about it, and also whether all healing comes from God. If you haven’t yet read the article, I would encourage you to do

so.

Like you, I think there are reasons for Christians to be concerned about Reiki. For one thing, as it's often represented, it has a very different understanding of "God" than biblical Christianity. Thus, when it claims that healing comes from "God," it is asserting something different from what a Christian would mean when he/she claims to have been healed by God. Second, the emphasis on spirit guides should cause us concern. The Bible never tells us to seek a spirit guide, but often warns us of deceptive and demonic spirits. Third, the Bible doesn't talk about a universal life force energy which we can learn to manipulate for health and healing. This sort of language is very foreign to a biblical worldview and is only at home (really) in an Eastern worldview, or one influenced by Eastern thought.

For these reasons and others (spelled out in my article), I think it's a mistake to get involved with Reiki. My perspective would really be the same as yours. Reiki sounds like "an occult type practice that people have tried to squeeze into a Christian box and it's not quite fitting."

I would gently challenge your friend to consider the many ways in which Reiki beliefs and practices seem so foreign (and even contrary) to the teachings of the Bible. For a bible-believing Christian, Reiki seems like a difficult practice to justify.

I hope this helps a bit. Please see my article for a bit more information.

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn