

Are Carmelite (Interior) prayer and Mindfulness Meditation compatible?

[Br. Baptiste de l'Assomption o.c.d.](#) -
published on 13/07/19

Introduction

It is not easy to distinguish between Carmelite prayer and mindfulness meditation. To help us do so, let's examine **seven false similarities** between these two practices.

The application "**Meditate with Little Bamboo**" is extremely popular. In one click, you can participate in a mindfulness meditation session for a small fee. According to "**Little Bamboo**", the benefit of meditation is unanimously recognized. But, is it compatible with **Christian prayer**? And more precisely with prayer as taught by Saint Teresa of Avila, doctor of the Church? The answer is a resounding **No!** The techniques of mindfulness meditation are inspired by spiritual traditions that seek the destruction of desire and the dissolution of the person. Without saying so, and sometimes even pretending to be Christians, they take a contrary path to the Gospels

1 DO WE PRAY TO TAKE CARE OF OUR SOULS?

The term "meditation" means "to take care of". So, it seems that **Carmelite prayer** and **mindfulness** coincide since these two practices are aimed at **taking care of our soul**.

Do we not say that **interior prayer** provides certain fruits of healing, happiness, peace, joy, liberation?

Don't we see in all bookstores book titles that ensure us happiness by means of "**meditation**"?

In reality, Carmelite prayer, according to Teresa of Avila's definition, is an **exchange of friendship with Jesus**. If, in fact, along with the idea of exchange, there is the idea "**taking care of someone**".

However, interior prayer does not invite us to take care of our own soul but of Jesus, himself, and the suffering members of his Mystical Body.

If we do experience what we legitimately call inner fruits of peace, joy, etc., they are only the consequence of this primary purpose that we seek.

"O my God, the Trinity whom I adore," writes Saint Elizabeth of the Trinity, "help me to forget myself completely."

Teresa of the Little Flower says that we pray because we have understood that "Jesus desires to be loved".

In reality, to take care of one's soul, in prayer, is to walk contrary to the Gospels. Jesus told us: "He who loses his soul, will find it" and he said to St. Teresa of Avila: "Take care of my business and I will take care of yours."

This is the key to **happiness!** The key to **holiness!** The eternal and blessed God, in his merciful goodness, wants me to participate in his intimate life, He wants, as a purely free gift of love, to make himself a slave of my love by allowing me to participate with Him in the redemption of the world. So, I enter into prayer to take care of Jesus, that is, to love him and make him loved.