
Book 14

The Myth of Mega Mysticism

How Does God Speak To Us?

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The chapter numbers below are color-coded according to the following categories in order to help you prioritize your reading:

Best: The most helpful, interesting and/or important chapters of the book.

Essential: Important chapters to understand the topic of the book.

Specialized: Chapters for the finer or more complex points of the topic of the book.

I: Introduction to Mega Mysticism

14.1: Understanding Mega Mysticism: *Extra-biblical Revelation for Extra-biblical Decision Making* [13 pp.]

- A) **A Balance Between the "Bible Only" and Mega Mystical Camps**
 - B) **Mega Mystic John Eldredge:** "God whispered, 'Go fishing'"
 - C) **Mysticism:** Direct communication from God
 - D) **Mega mysticism:** Extra-biblical divine *communication for extra-biblical decision making*
 - E) **Mental telepathy:** *The primary means of mega mysticism*
- Extras & Endnotes*

14.2: Illustrating Mega Mysticism: *Its Alarming Popularity in American Christianity* [15 pp.]

- A) **The Popularity & Intimidation of Mega Mysticism**
- B) **Jack Deere**
- C) **Bill Hybels**
- D) **Dallas Willard**
- E) **Henry Blackaby**
- F) **Richard Foster**
- G) **Mark Virkler**
- H) **A. B. Simpson**
- I) **Marv Rosenthal**
- J) **J. P. Moreland**

K) Charles Swindoll*Extras & Endnotes***II: Responding to Mega Mysticism****14.3: Responding to Mega Mysticism** [25 pp.]**A) Responding to Mega Mysticism****B) Dealing With the Real Reason There are Mega Mystics****C) Modern Responses to Mega Mysticism**

C.1) John MacArthur

C.2) J. I. Packer

C.3) D. M. Lloyd-Jones

C.4) Bruce Waltke

C.5) John Piper

C.6) Other Modern Responses

*Extras & Endnotes***14.4: Mega Mysticism & Divine Revelation** [34 pp.]**A) Mega Mysticism Ignores the God-given Place of Spirit-liberated Reason****B) Mega Mysticism Fails the Test of Superior Virtue****C) Mega Mysticism Misunderstands Biblical Faith****D) Mega Mysticism Ignores the Authentication of Divine Revelation****E) Mega Mysticism Ignores the Progress in Divine Revelation****F) Mega Mysticism Ignores the Communal Nature of Divine Revelation****G) Mega Mysticism Disparages the Authority of Scripture****H) Mega Mysticism Disparages Legitimate Sources of Extra-biblical Revelation**

H.1) Divine revelation through our New Nature

H.2) Divine revelation through spiritual gifts

H.3) Divine revelation through God-ordained authorities

*Extras & Endnotes***14.5: Mega Mysticism & God's Will** [58 pp.]**A) Introduction: A Pressing, Popular, & Perplexing Topic****B) The Starting Point: The Nature of God's Will**B.1) The Certainty & Relative Rarity of God's *Predestined Will*B.1.a) The unrevealed *predestined will* of GodB.1.b) The revealed *predestined will* of God in the "controlling call"

- B.1.c) The relationship of God's *Predestined Will* to divine guidance
- B.2) The Clarity & Sufficiency of God's *Moral Prescribed Will*
 - B.2.a) Distinguishing God's *predestined* from *prescribed will*
 - B.2.b) The sufficiency of God's *prescribed will*
- B.3) The Freedom & Frequency of God's *Amoral Permissive Will*
- B.4) The Harmful Exaggeration of an Extra-biblical *Private Will*
 - B.4.a) Understanding a *private will*
 - B.4.b) Supposed biblical support for a *private will*
 - B.4.c) Supposed costs to self-esteem if *private will* is denied
 - B.4.d) The damages of believing in a *private will*
- B.5) The Difficulty & Delight of God's Miraculous *Prayed-for Will*

C) Provision for the Journey: Divine Tools for Decision Making

D) Arriving at the Destination: Making a God-pleasing Decision

- D.1) The Marriage Decision
- D.2) The Ministry Decision

Extras & Endnotes

Diagram 14.5: The Wills of God

Table 14.5: The Wills of God

14.6: Mega Mysticism & Mental Telepathy [27 pp.]

A) Divine Revelation vs. Divine Manipulation through Mental Telepathy: *And the problem with mega mystical doctrine*

B) Examples of Divine Manipulation through Mental Telepathy

C) Unlikely Allusions to Divine/Human Mental Telepathy in Believers

- C.1) Mental telepathy is to be distinguished from biblical means of revelation
- C.2) David's plans for the temple put in his mind by the Spirit? *1 Chron 28:12*
- C.3) God putting words in a Prophet's mouth? *Jer 1:9*
- C.4) The Spirit speaking through the disciples? *Matt 10:18-20*
- C.5) God controlling the reply of the tongue? *Prov 16:1*
- C.6) God directing the king's heart? *Prov 21:1*

D) Unlikely Allusions to Demonic Mental Telepathy

- D.1) Does the devil "inspire" unbelievers? *1 Tim 4:1*
- D.2) Does the devil "inspire" believers?

E) Observations Regarding Divine Manipulation through Mental Telepathy

- E.1) Divine revelation & human recognition are not necessary to fulfill God's will: *Prov 16:9; 19:21; 20:24*
- E.2) *Divine/Human Mental Telepathy* is Extremely Rare & Practiced on Pagans
- E.3) *Divine/human mental telepathy* & "inspiration"

E.4) *Divine/human mental telepathy & mega mysticism*

E.5) *Divine/human mental telepathy & prayer*

Extras & Endnotes

14.7: Mega Mysticism & Circumstances [25 pp.]

- A) Introduction to *Mega Mystical View of Circumstances***
- B) No Biblical Support for *Mega Mystical View of Circumstances***
- C) *Mega Mysticism Causes Superstition & Divination***
 - C.1) *Superstition in Mega Mysticism*
 - C.2) *Understanding Divination in Mega Mysticism*
 - C.3) *Responding to the Divination in Mega Mysticism*
- D) Response of Packer to *Mega Mystical View of Circumstances***
- E) Response of Friesen to *Mega Mystical View of Circumstances***

Extras & Endnotes

14.8: Mega Mysticism's Rejection Throughout Church History [23 pp.]

- A) Introduction**
- B) *Gnosticism & Mystery Cults in the Early Church***
- C) *Monasticism in the Middle Ages***
- D) *Anabaptists in the Protestant Reformation***
- E) *Quakerism***
- F) *The Great Awakening***
- G) *Charles Spurgeon***

Extras & Endnotes

14.9: The Dangers of Mega Mysticism [47 pp.]

- A) The Danger of Lying in *Mega Mysticism***
- B) The Danger of Abusing Authority in *Mega Mysticism***
- C) The Danger of Devaluing Scripture in *Mega Mysticism***
 - C.1) *The Devaluation of Scripture in Mega Mysticism Stated*
 - C.2) *The Devaluation of Scripture in Mega Mysticism Illustrated*
 - C.3) *The Hypocrisy in Mega Mysticism When Defending the Authority of Scripture*
- D) The Danger of Disparaging Reason in *Mega Mysticism***
 - D.1) *Introduction to Mega Mysticism & Reason*
 - D.2) *Free Will & Mega Mysticism*
 - D.3) *Mega Mysticism's Encouragement of Foolishness*

- D.4) *Mega Mysticism's* Hypocritical Reliance on Reason
- D.5) Some Conclusions on *Mega Mysticism* & Reason
- E) The Danger of Intimidation & Arrogance in *Mega Mysticism***
- F) The Danger of Perverting Prayer in *Mega Mysticism***
- Extras & Endnotes*

III: *Mega Mysticism's* Abuse of Biblical Characters

14.10: The Claim of *Mega Mysticism* to the Revelatory Experiences of Biblical Characters [24 pp.]

- A) The Claims to Biblical Characters in *Mega Mysticism***
- B) Taking Scripture Out of its Time Context**
- C) No Biblical Character is Described as Experiencing *Mental Telepathy***
- D) How Biblical Characters *Really* Made Decisions:** *Reason, not revelation*
- Extras & Endnotes*

14.11: OT Characters & *Mega Mysticism* [17 pp.]

- A) Abraham**
- B) Abraham's servant**
- C) Rebecca**
- D) Moses**
- E) Joshua**
- F) Gideon**
- G) Samuel**
- H) David**
- I) Jonathan**
- J) Other OT examples**

Extras & Endnotes

14.12: Christ & *Mega Mysticism* [10 pp.]

- A) Let Us Dare Not Compare Ourselves with God the Son**
- B) Jesus Actually "Saw" and "Heard" the Father**

Extras & Endnotes

14.13: The Apostles & *Mega Mysticism* [20 pp.]

- A) Christ's Promises of Revelation For Apostles Do Not Prescribe the Same For Us**

- B) The Promise of an Advocate, Not a Counselor:** *John 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16:7-8*
 - C) The Promise to Write Scripture, Not Receive Extra-biblical Revelation:** *John 14:25-26*
 - D) Another Promise to Write Scripture, Not Provide Extra-biblical Truth:** *John 16:12-15*
 - E) Apostolic Revelation, Not Mega Mystical Community:** *1 Cor 2:1-16*
 - F) "The Holy Spirit Said" through NT Prophets:** *Acts 13:1-3; 15:28*
- Extras & Endnotes*

IV: Mega Mysticism's Abuse of Biblical Passages

14.14: Mega Mysticism's Abuse of Biblical Passages [22 pp.]

- A) Introduction**
- B) The "Pull" of the Father** *John 6:44*
- C) The "Voice" of Christ** *John 8:46-47; 9:39-10:28*
- D) The Counsel of God** *Ps 16:7; 73:24; 48:14*
- E) The Comfort of God** *2 Cor 1:3-4*
- F) The "Peace of God"** *John 14:27; Col 3:15; Phil 4:7*
 - F.1) The Uses of "Peace" in Scripture
 - F.2) The Practical Peace of Proper Reasoning
 - F.3) The "Peace of Christ" in Colossians 3:15
 - F.4) The "Peace of God" in Philippians 4:7
 - F.5) The Peace from Christ in John 14:27
 - F.6) No Peace from Circumstances in 2 Corinthians 2:13
 - F.7) The Practical Dangers of Relying on Feelings

Extras & Endnotes

14.15: Mega Mysticism & "Spirit" Passages [14 pp.]

- A) Being "Led by the Spirit":** *Rom 8:12-14; Gal 5:16-18*
- B) The Spirit's Anointing:** *1 John 2:20, 27*
- C) "What the Spirit Says to the Churches":** *Rev 2:7*
- D) Speaking By the Spirit:** *Luke 12:11-12; Eph 6:19-20*
- E) "Testing the Spirits":** *1 John 4:1*

Extras & Endnotes

14.16: Being Led in "The Way" [12 pp.]

- A) The Meaning of "The Way" & Related Terms in Scripture**
- B) The Meaning of "the Way" in Psalm 32:8**
- C) The Meaning of "Paths" in Proverbs 3:5-7**
- D) The Meaning of the "Voice" in Isaiah 30:19-21**
- E) The Meaning of "Directs Every Detail of Our Lives" in Psalm 37:23**

Publications & Particulars

14.17: Understanding Biblical Wisdom [11 pp.]

- A) Introduction to Biblical Wisdom**
- B) Wisdom as Divine Revelation**
- C) Wisdom as Human Knowledge**
- D) Wisdom as Prudence**
- E) Wisdom as Skill**
- F) Wisdom as Morals**

Extras & Endnotes

14.18: Spiritual Wisdom & Desires From God [26 pp.]

A) Mega Mysticism & Spiritual Wisdom

- A.1) Proverbs 2:1-6: *The Lord gives wisdom*
- A.2) James 1:5-8: *Asking God for wisdom*
- A.3) Colossians 1:9-11: *Asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will*
- A.4) Ephesians 1:17-19: *Praying for spiritual wisdom & revelation*

B) Mega Mysticism & Spiritual Desires

- B.1) 2 Corinthians 8:16: *Titus' concern for the Corinthians*
- B.2) Nehemiah 2:11-12: *A burden for Jerusalem*
- B.3) 1 Kings 8:17-19: *David's desire to build a temple*
- B.4) Mother Teresa's Calling to the Poor

Extras & Endnotes

V: Appendices on Mega Mysticism

14.19: Mega Mysticism & Modern Counseling: *Theophostic Prayer Ministry* [15 pp.]

- A) Understanding Theophostic Prayer Ministry**
- B) Specifically Responding to *Theophostic Prayer Ministry***
 - B.1) Claiming supernatural direct divine revelation
 - B.2) A disparagement of *Spirit-liberated reason*
 - B.3) Misinterpreting emotion as the Holy Spirit

- B.4) Using erroneous interpretations and applications of Scripture
- B.5) Confusing salvation experience with ongoing revelatory experiences
- B.6) An unbiblical acceptance of the “illumination of the Spirit” theory
- B.7) Leading people on to expect a direct revelation from Jesus

Publications & Particulars