

KI/CHI POWER AND THE CHRISTIAN

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BY KENT HARALSON, PHD

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CONTACT GMAU AT:

GMAU INTERNATIONAL
1001 E. PALMER ST.
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46203

OR ON THE WEB:

WWW.GMAU.ORG EMAIL: JRRUSSELL@IUPUI.EDU

Preface

CHI. Chinese. “spirit”, “air”, “breath”, or “vital energy”. A biophysical energy generated through breathing techniques. Ideally, chi can infuse a person with tremendous vitality and make him or her extremely powerful in action, much more so than the power developed purely through the muscular system alone. Known also in Japanese as ki.

The Overlook Martial Arts Dictionary
Emil Farkas and John Corcoran
Overlook Press

KI. The concept of Ki is one of the most important in Japanese philosophy. It directly concerns everyone's daily life, since it is nothing less than the vital energy of that life.

A Dictionary of the Martial Arts Lous Frederic
Charles E. Tuttle Company

It is the position of this author that ki/chi is not a mystical ethereal force. It is not some fourth-dimensional entity. Ki/chi is the cumulative energy to be gained by developing the spiritual, mental and physical elements of the human being. This position has been arrived at as a result of over twenty years of active involvement and teaching in the martial arts and extensive reading of the available literature.

1. Introduction

In order to discuss the definition of chi and its relationship to a specific martial art , it is necessary to establish some background material for the martial art system. Since much of the material in this booklet resulted from the development and growth of a martial arts team that I founded, it is important for the reader to understand the nature of that team. The Gospel Karate Team was established in 1978 as a ministry of a local Church. A member school of the Christian Black Belt Association, and a founding school of the Gospel Martial Arts Union, all aspects of the team were held up to the scrutiny of the Bible. It is the position of this author that the martial arts as taught and practiced in this team is in perfect harmony with the traditional martial arts and in no way does it compromise the Holy Scriptures. In fact this author believes that the teachings in the Gospel Karate Team are far more representative of the traditional martial arts than the vast majority of “karate schools” in America today.

The Bible teaches that any person or group without a vision is doomed to failure. As a result, the Gospel Karate Team was established with two visions:

1. The sole purpose for which the Son of God became flesh was to provide a way of redemption to a lost world (Lu. 19: 10). As Christians, bought with the price of Jesus' blood, our purpose is to carry this Gospel message to others (Mt. 28:19-20). Should we fail, the blood of those who are cast into Hell is on our hands (Ez. 3:18). The Gospel Karate Team exists to carry a clear message of salvation to all with whom it comes into contact.

2. The Bible is full of references to men. The world, under the influence of Satan, has its own idea of what a man is. The Gospel Karate Team teaches and demonstrates that a real man is physical, mental and spiritual (Lu. 2: 52, Lu. 9:23, 1 Thes. 5:23). This is also supported by the fact that the underlying philosophy of Shaolin was that the martial arts are a means for developing physically, mentally, and spiritually, and not just a fighting method for defeating ones enemies. It is this philosophy that has made the difference between ordinary street fighting and the true martial arts.¹ Along with this goes the expectations that a man ought to look, walk, talk, stand, sit and act like a man. In the Korean language “kup” is a reference to boyhood, and “dan” is a reference to manhood. Thus, as a martial artist progresses through the “kup” (or “kyu” in Japanese) ranks towards his “dan” (Black belt) rank, one should expect a corresponding growth towards true manhood. The Gospel Karate Team is building men to stand as an army for God in stark contrast to what one sees in the world today.

Originally the Gospel Karate Team was based completely on Tae Kwon Do. This is a blend of historical Korean arts and Japanese Karate with 70% emphasis on use of the legs. Both are hard style martial arts and are effective in realizing the vision of the Gospel Karate Team. However, the soft styles of Kung Fu from China and Jujutsu from Japan can offer much to provide necessary balance and compliment the capabilities of the true martial artist. As a result, the original teachings of punch, kick, hard counterattacks, breaking techniques and sparing have been augmented by focus on techniques for locking, restraint, falls, release and use of nerve centers. This also provides the student with a range of techniques from which to choose. He is not limited to violent responses, but rather can use mind-control to walk away, activate a nerve center, place the opponent into a restraint position, attack a non-lethal target, or as a last resort wield a lethal counterattack. Thus the team uses an eclectic style.

The ranking system involved 10 kyu grades as the student progresses from white through brown belt and then into the dan ranks of the black belt. No student of the art should ever be granted a black belt until he has demonstrated his “manhood” in all three aspects (mental, physical and spiritual). The requirements for rank advancement demonstrate this as increasing proficiency is expected in each area. Specific areas examined include forms (kata or hyung), one step and three step counterattacks, board and concrete breaking, sparing, nerve center knowledge and attacks, locking and restraint techniques, releases, scripture memorization, knowledge of soul winning techniques (explaining the Gospel of Jesus Christ), visitation and soul winning, book reports and church service.

This background material will facilitate the definition of chi and its relationship to the martial arts as taught and practiced in a local dojo setting.

Chi is not a technique, it is a power that emanates from right living, positive mental attitude, solid faith in who you are and what you can do and a conditioned mind-body.

2. Definition

Much has been written about the chi (Chinese word with the Japanese counterpart being ki). Many martial arts systems have been based on it. Many stories and exaggerations exist regarding feats utilizing the chi. Many misunderstandings exist and this has led to controversy regarding a Christian's pursuit of the martial arts³. This chapter will look at some simplistic definitions of chi, its historical background, and a more complete analysis of the concept of chi as applied to a specific martial art. The next chapter will then provide an analysis of chi from a Biblical perspective, demonstrating its unity with scripture.

Others have said about chi:

- Chi is the development of inner strength. S. Ribner
- The Orientals teach that the power of the universe resides in man two inches below his navel, and is referred to as the ki. C. Riedner
- One may attune himself to the life energy of the universe. K Tohei
- When people are alive, they are soft and supple. When they are dead, they become hard and rigid. When a plant is living, it is soft and tender. When it is dead, it becomes withered and dry. Hence, the hard and rigid belongs to the company of the dead. The soft and supple belongs to the company of the living. The softest of all things overrides the hardest of all things. To attain such a quality, people must develop their inner life force (chi). Lao-tze
- The psycho physiological power associated with blood, breath, and mind, the biophysical energy generated by respiratory rhythm. R. smith
- Chi is energy expressed in material form: light, strong and subtle chi floats as air; heavy, weak and coarse chi sinks to form solid substance. Chi is the principle of change and unity. M. Page
- Ki flows when determination and the spiritual essence of faith are united to accomplish an objective. This is why many masters eventually turn to God and why they intensify their meditations to understand the character of deity. The ability to apply ki is really a factor of personal character. J Wellendorf

The formalization of chi is rooted in the life and writing of Lao-tze (also spelled Lao-tsu). In his book Tao Te Ching (The Way of the Power), written between 640 B.C. and 479 B.C., Lao-tze said the most important thing in life is for people to be in harmony with nature and in balance with the universe. To gain this harmony and balance it was necessary to follow a certain path, or “way”, called Tao in Chinese. Over the centuries, many people read, thought about, and followed Lao-tzes' ideas. In combination with other philosophies such as Confucianism and Buddhism, Lao-tzes' ideas, called Taoism, greatly influenced all areas of Asian culture, including the martial arts. The Japanese world “do” (meaning a way or a method), originated from the concept of Tao and both are written using the same character.

Two martial arts particularly affected by Taoist thought are T'ai Chi Ch'uan of China and Aikido of Japan. Both arts follow very seriously the Taoist idea of “softness.”

“Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water; but when it attacks things hard and resistant, there is not one of them that can prevail. For they can find no way of altering it. That the yielding conquers the resistant and soft conquers the hard is a fact known by all men, yet utilized by none.” Lao-tze

Water is soft. It flows and will take any shape. If you press down on a pool of water, the water will give way to the hand. Yet if you are hit by a wave at the beach you know the tremendous power of water. Over a period of time the dripping of water wears away the hardest of rocks. Again, the wind is soft and will flow to assume any shape. Just as chi can not be seen, but its result can be viewed, the wind is not visible. The powerful and rigid oak will succumb to the wind and you can view the conquering of the soft over the hard. In Kung Fu, one punches and kicks in both a hard and soft manner, much as a towel can be snapped. A towel by itself is loose, limp, and soft. Yet as it is snapped quickly it becomes powerful and is rigid and hard at the moment of contact.

This duality of hard and soft is based on the Chinese concept of yin and yang. This philosophy holds that all things in the world are made up of opposites which work in harmony, complementing each other. Day and night are opposites, but they work together. There can be no day without night, no night without day. In the same way, there can be no hard without soft, no soft without hard. Following the laws of nature, it is wiser to bend in a storm, like a willow tree, than to stand rigid like an oak. “Bend and you will be whole,” said Lao-tze. Both Aikido and T' ai Chi use the idea of bending, or “yielding”, as a main principle of defense. The Aikido master would say you can try to turn back a stream of water, but it is much easier to lead it where you wish it to go. If asked how to best defend against a strong punching or kicking attack, the same master replies, “No matter how strong an attack is, if it falls on empty space, it is useless.”

Chi is so essential to the functioning of the human body that it is the basis for traditional Chinese medicine. Simply explained, the Chinese teach that chi flows throughout every person's body along certain pathways, which are called meridians. In some ways, chi and meridians are like electricity and circuits. When electrical circuits are clear, then the electricity flows easily and the whole system works well. If a short circuit occurs, or wires become disconnected or broken, then the system will fail. In a similar way, if the chi-flow along meridians in the body is interrupted, if there is some disorder, or if it is not being generated from within, then illness or disease will result. Just as an electrician sets to work repairing a broken electrical circuit, so too a Chinese doctor sets to work regulating and repairing the chi flow. This treatment has been formalized in the practice of acupuncture.

Western thinking has not fully recognized the existence of chi, even though there are many well-known examples of its operation. Familiar stories are told of the mother who miraculously lifts up an automobile to save her child trapped beneath it. Her extraordinary strength comes from her use of chi. When people lift very heavy objects

they unconsciously breathe in and hold their breath. If they exhaled instead, they would find it very difficult to lift that same object. This feeling of extra strength comes from the operation of chi. The small frail experienced lady school teacher can step into a rowdy classroom of high school students and she instantly command control. Her projection of authority is an application of chi. The runner has that sudden burst of energy on the last lap, when his disciplined body passes beyond exhaustion and the mind and body blend into one for the pursuit of the goal. This is chi.

The concept of chi is not exclusively Chinese. The Indian word prana, the Greek pneuma and the Hebrew ruakh all have much in common with it. The Greek word as used in the Bible speaks of a current of air, by analogy or figuratively a spirit (i.e. the human rational soul), by implication the vital principle, or superhuman as in an angel or demon. Further developing the philosophy of Lao-tze, Mencius a contemporary of Chuang Tzu (Lao-tzes' successor) stated that if the will is concentrated, the Vital Energy (chi) will flow and become active. To him the Will is of the highest importance and the Vitality stands second. The chi, as a result, was not realizable until the "heart" was right and the chi was consciously developed. This is in keeping with the quotation used early by Jan Wellendorf who also referred to "agents of faith" which were essential to having good ki. The power of one's ki was directly proportional to the degree with which one cultivated love, peace, hope, humility, wisdom, honesty, charity, commitment, virtue, truth, compassion, and courage in his life⁵.

Most martial arts systems combine the hard and soft styles to some extent, however they usually draw techniques from just one of the styles as their principle source. These styles are classified as External (hard) referring to the use of the bodies external muscular force, and Internal (soft) referring to internal forces such as chi. The foundations of the Internal System were the Will, the Vital Energy (chi), effortlessness, and spontaneity. The chi, inherent in man, must be preserved, nourished and replenished. The Will aids in this, directing the Vital Energy (chi) through the body. Though the techniques smacks of the carnival environment, there are many who, utilizing these techniques can withstand fist and foot blows on most body surfaces. With effortlessness, attacks are absorbed. Spontaneity provides the attack which "begins after the enemy does, but arrives before his does." The Internal System adds glandular and mind exercise, eye fixation, breathing and diet to the muscular exercises favored by the External System.

T'ai chi is perhaps the best known of the modern martial arts which is heavily based on these Taoist precepts. To provide the reader with an example of how all these concepts come together, consider the main principles of T'ai Chi which follow²:

- First, last, and always, the student must relax. Doing the postures slowly and correctly aid him in this. All rigidity and strength must be emptied from the upper torso and must sink to the very soles of his feet, one of which is always firmly rooted to the ground.
- The student relaxes completely and breathes like a child - naturally through the nose, using the diaphragm rather than the intracostal muscles.

- Only in the flexibility of the waist is there true strength, for the waist is the foundation of all bodily movement. It is the axis from which all T'ai Chi movements derive their celerity, crispness, and power. To fight with arms or legs independent of the waist is the mark of the perpetual beginner.
- The earliest classics on T'ai Chi stress that when the sacrum is vertical, the intrinsic energy (chi) reaches to the top of the head and that when the head is held as if suspended from above the entire body feels light and nimble. The body must be held “so light that the addition of a feather will be felt, and so pliable that a fly cannot alight on it without setting it in motion.”
- Every movement in correct T'ai Chi is circular. An attack is matter traveling on a straight line. If the force is opposed by a straight line defense, the stronger force will prevail. But if the incoming force is neutralized by circularity it is a simple matter to defeat an opponent, regardless of how strong he may be. If one were pushed by a force of one hundred pounds frontally, he would withdraw slightly and neutralize the opponents push. If the opponent cannot check his momentum he will go over his toes and a slight pull is enough to bring him down. If, however, he sees his error, checks his forward impetus, and begins to withdraw backward, the incoming and outgoing forces cancel each other, and by applying a force of but five pounds on the line of his retreating body, he can be toppled easily.

Even though all people have chi, in most cases it is untapped, undeveloped, and uncontrolled. While the woman we spoke of earlier tapped her chi potential under extreme stress, she would probably not have been able to do so in a calm, rational moment. In Kung Fu, however, chi is recognized as the practitioner's primary source of energy, and he consciously trains to develop or cultivate his chi. He does special exercises so he can have a smooth, good chi flow and can control and use chi at will. Essentially he learns to keep his body meridians (muscles, joints, nervous system, cardiovascular system ...) in good condition and to channel his energy so that his body can become more efficient and powerful.

The primary exercise for cultivating the chi is called meditation. It is done by practicing special breathing exercises while sitting, lying, or standing in certain body positions. Meditation requires that the body be in proper posture and alignment so that the meridians in the body are free and not blocking each other. Students are taught special ways to breath, and at the same time, they meditate (thinking deeply and concentrating on their breathing). At advanced levels of Kung Fu, practitioners learn more difficult positions and breathing patterns, and eventually, after much practice, they can actually begin to feel their chi pulsate in their bodies, and can begin to gain control over it. At this point the practitioner has passed beyond the line of acceptability for a Christian and into the world of mysticism and the occult.

In contrast to the modern Western culture, where the younger athlete is most respected, in the East it is the older master who receives this respect. Muscular (external) strength tends to pass with youth, but chi (internal) strength increases with age, and with chi strength comes more energy and better technique.

Practicing prescribed exercises and kata for years leads to the development of what is called nai gung, or “inner strength”. Those who have nai gung have gained control of their chi, and those few who have done so have also performed many miraculous physical feats. Chi has served as the great equalizer in the martial arts. Regardless of weight, height or muscles, it is the person who has developed chi and knows how to use it correctly who will become the victor.

This is because of four things that chi enables in the practitioner ⁵.

- 1) Chi increases the power and speed to the absolute limits. Through constant repetition of technique and flexibility, the speed of technique is dramatically increased.
- 2) Chi improves coordination and timing. Through constant repetition of technique during kata with an imaginary opponent, you develop a “mental recognition of the moment” enabling you to respond to threats faster than others.
- 3) Chi protects the body from injury through breathing and the ability to channel control to any part of the body instantly.
- 4) Chi controls the mind of the opponent. Some call it “personal power”, but the chi of a person in control can be felt by an opponent. This “wave of intent” has a strong affect on the opponent.

It is because of this that the methods of chi development were some of the most closely guarded secrets of the Chinese martial arts. This has also caused many Christians to avoid this valuable aspect of the martial arts.

While a formal definition of chi is elusive, it can be characterized, and from this one can better understand it and apply it to his own martial art style. The following is a list of the essential characteristics of chi:

- Focus on discovery of the inner strength and capabilities of the body, - utilize the soft and fluid.
- Observable result of an invisible force.
- Yield to the rigid.
- Clear meridians (muscle groups, joints, cardiovascular system, ...).
- Developing the will (heart) to enable the discovery of the vital energy (chi). This carries with it the concept of righteous living.
- Requires effortlessness.
- Channel energies for efficiency, and explosive moment of attack and then relax.
- Breathe from the hara (tanden).
- Respect for the elder.
- Grounded in a solid stance.
- Maintain proper body posture (back straight, hips and shoulders in alignment and flexibility of waist), - utilize circular motions.

- Exudes self-confidence and the power of personality.
- Develop "agents of faith" to grow your character.
- Control of fear.
- Constant practice of kata.

3. Chi - The Christian Perspective

In the prior chapter, the essence of chi was defined and characterized. The training necessary to realize chi in the life of a martial arts practitioner was also discussed. In this chapter, we shall touch on several of those concepts and demonstrate that they can be in harmony with the Christian life.

It is important that the reader understand one of Satan's techniques. As the master deceiver, he has identified elements of this cosmos that were ordained of God to edify the life of the believer and bring glory to God, and then insert his own counterfeit. Satan saw that love in marriage was good, and he substituted lust. Satan saw that divine astrology declared the glory of God (Ps. 19) and he substituted horoscopes. Satan saw that God ordained government, and he substituted tyranny. Satan saw that personal dignity reflected the image of the Creator and so he substituted pride.

In the martial arts the story is the same. A very powerful and effective element in the martial arts is that captured by the word ki/chi. It provides the man of discipline with extra-ordinary capabilities. As the Oriental martial arts developed with its focus on Pantheistic Monism as a religious base, Satan once again offered his substitute for good. Satan, the power behind the occult, has promised to deliver power to those who will worship him (Genesis 3: 5 and Matthew 4:9). That power is available, but it is a counterfeit because in the end the student is consumed by Satan (1 Peter 5:8). The Christian martial artist, rather than rejecting something good from God, should reclaim it from the secular world of Satan.

We will see later that all physical power comes from the waist area. It revolves around the tant'ien (hara, tanden), that area two inches below the navel, and this tant'ien is considered the warehouse of the chi. Speaking of force and power, the Bible states, "Lo, now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly" (Job 40:16). Isaiah, speaking of the coming Messiah spoke of his "righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (Is 11:5). The word reins is often translated waist or kidneys to identify its location. The Hebrew word means "the seat of vigor as in the sense of strength." In John 7:38, we read "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Again, we see the "navel" area as a source of strength. This power from within must be developed. No doubt it can be used for evil, but that which God created in us is not evil in itself. It is how it is developed and used which must come under scrutiny.

We saw that Mencius believed that the chi could only be developed and cultivated through right living. He wrote “Do not seek your vitality (chi) for what you do not find in your heart.”² In the Bible we read that God will provide our needs if we will first seek his righteousness (Matt. 6: 33), and that you will become what you ponder in your heart (prov. 23:7).

Jan Wellendorf stated that “Determination and Faith are the keys to personal magnitude”, and thus the essence of “the power of personality.”⁵ This character trait was obtained by setting goals and then increasing one's desire and determination to achieve those goals by constant consistent effort. Mencius stated that “if the will is concentrated, the vital energy will follow it and become active.”² This is the kind of focus and energy Paul spoke of in Philippians 3:13-14.

Lao-tze said that the most important thing in life is for people to be in harmony with nature and in balance with the universe. King Solomon summarized this well at the conclusion of his years as he wrote “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccl 12: 13). What better way to be in harmony than to know where you came from, why you are here, how you are to live, and where you will spend eternity?

A seeking for inner strength and a world of opposites is made reference to the concepts of yin and yang. Consider that by ourselves we can do nothing (Jn. 15:5), but with Christ we can do all things (Phil. 4:13). When I am weak, I become strong (2 Cor. 12:9). For me to live is Christ and to die is gain (Phi. 1: 21), and life without Christ is death (Jn. 3:36). In humility, we are exalted (James 4:4-10). By losing all, we gain all (Job 1:21). Through surrender, we have victory (Luke 6:29-35). By servitude we have greatness (Mark 10:42-45). And, one finds happiness by not seeking it (Phil 4:1-4). Man must recognize that all strength, wisdom and understanding begins with a knowledge of the God of the Bible and that only through a close walk with Him, can the vast potential of this body of clay be realized in a way of eternal value.

Respect for the elder is expected in the East and appears lost in the West. The author of Wisdom teaches us that we are to respect the “gray head” (prov’ 20: 29), obey our parents (Eph. 6:1-3) and submit to all in authority (Rom. 13:1-7).

Lao-tze was concerned with not hurting others and stressed that “The way to heaven is to benefit, not to harm”². The Bible exhorts us to live peaceably with all men (Rom. 12:18). Through the intelligent use of the martial arts, this minimal use of force and options, help a person realize this goal and yet maintain the safety of himself and his family (1 Tim. 5:8). The Internal strength (soft) will have victory over the External strength (hard) and the Scripture tells us that a “soft answer turneth away wrath” (prov. 15: 1). By a look of the eyes, Jesus, in his personal power, was able to bring Peter to tears (Lu. 22:61-62).

Meditation was stressed as a vehicle for developing this strength. Here caution is advised. Ron Tottingham states that “The Christian martial artist must be continually watchful to avoid the false doctrines of Luciferianism which has gotten into the martial arts systems.”⁶ If the mind is to be emptied as some arts styles propose, Satan will have an ideal void to occupy and consume the practitioner. This concept of meditation is an outgrowth of Taoism and Buddhism and should have no place in the life of a Christian. However, if during exercises (breathing, sitting, standing ...) we concentrate on those skills we are learning, on the imaginary opponent during kata and on the control of our bodily components, we will condition our total being for more effective living.

There should be a daily time of meditating in God's Word and his will for our life. Jan Wellendorf stated that “many masters eventually turn to God and intensify their meditations to understand the character of the deity.”⁵ “The highest goal of all Kung Fu study is to obtain unity of one's physical, mental and spiritual self”.¹ God exhorts us to meditate in His Word continually (Joshua 1:8), to have delight in His Law when we walk, stand and sit (Ps. 1:1-2 and Deut. 4: 4-9), and to renew our mind by conforming to the life of Jesus Christ (Rom. 12:1-2).

A true master of the arts will seek a balance of self, nature, society and the universe. King Solomon also warned us against excess in any direction (prov. 25: 16-17), and we are taught that a man will balance his life in the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects (Lu. 9:23).

Finally, Tao was a “way” of life. To be mastered, it had to be practiced day after day, month after month, and year after year. The Christian is to never look back (with a desire to return to the old life) (Luke 9:62), but to always “press on” toward the prize (Phil. 3: 14). The Epistles of Paul provide a call to Christians for consistency and striving for a life in line with the example set for us by Christ.

In each aspect, the philosophy and teaching of the original martial arts can be unified with that of the life of the true believer. But just as any easing in the rigors of training can be devastating to the hopeful practitioner, so too the Christian martial artist must “try the spirits” because “many false prophets are gone out into the world”, and continually be watchful against the false doctrines and counterfeits of the cultist martial arts systems.

4. Chi - Its Relationship to the Martial Arts

Most martial arts historical experts agree that formalization of the arts originated during the T'ang Dynasty in China. To be sure, the martial arts existed long before that and can be traced to the Middle East during early Bible times, but the formalization took place in China⁷. It migrated to Korea through Okinawa and Japan, and directly from China. We will briefly review these two migrations in order to understand the roots of the specific martial arts to be analyzed.

As the Chinese invaded Okinawa and disarmed the people, the people began to search their past and call upon masters from the mainland to develop self-defense capabilities. The art formalized into Okinawa-te (Okinawa hand). The Chinese language character referring to the T'ang Dynasty was called kara, as a result this emerging art was also known as kara-te. A drawback of te was the desire to develop the physical techniques quickly for immediate use in Okinawa. As a result, the mental (to some degree) and especially the spiritual dimensions of T'ang Su lost their emphasis.

Early in the twentieth-century, by invitation of the government of Japan, the Okinawan Master Funakoshi traveled to Japan to teach his style of te to the Japanese. By the 1930's it was very popular, and in an attempt to make it even more appealing, he altered the writing of the characters which meant "Chinese Hand" to mean "empty hand" (both writings are pronounced the same).

Shortly after the development of the martial arts under the T'ang Dynasty, the nobles and knights of the three small Korean kingdoms developed fighting techniques based on those of T'ang Su. These early techniques were organized under the name of Hwa Rang Do. This was the eighth-century warrior code and meant the "way to be traveled in life." As might be expected, the three original tenets of the arts (mental, physical and spiritual) were well represented in the "do". From 1909 until 1945, Japan ruled Korea. During this rule, they banned the practice of Korean martial arts. As a result, over this thirty-five year period, many of the Chinese arts that had been practiced in Korea were lost. In their place the Japanese introduced many of their own martial arts, especially Kendo, Judo and Karate. In the 1940's, the Koreans gradually took from the Japanese and developed their own brand of "karate." The first dojang was opened in Seoul with a style called Chung Do Kwon. Many other adaptations followed. In the 1950's, the style Tae Kwon Do (the way of kicking and punching) and its formalization took shape under the teaching of Duk Sung Son and General Choi. This term has become the generic term for all Korean styles much like Karate is a generic term for Japanese styles. The major difference between the Okinawan and Japanese Karate and the Korean Tae Kwon Do is that the former generally places equal emphasis on the use of both hand and leg techniques, while the Koreans tend to place a majority of emphasis on leg techniques.

Tae Kwon Do as formalized by Duk Sung Son was stressed as essentially a discipline of the mind, the body and the spirit. A state of equilibrium among these three aspects must be achieved and then maintained in order to develop fully the resources within oneself (chi) ⁴.

As one watches a typical Tae Kwon Do class, he sees the students doing basic movements, staged counter attacks, forms (ka ta or hyungs) and free sparing. To understand these in relationship to chi it is necessary to study the fundamental elements upon which Tae Kwon Do is built. Each of these visible manifestations are built upon several of the fundamentals. It is in this context that one can appreciate why Tae Kwon Do is called a martial "art" and how it related to the chi. As in the case of painting, singing, or any other activity generally classified as an art, the art is in the striving. The goal is never realized. True art never ages, the artist continues to find new ways of

expression and higher levels of perfection. One becomes an artist when he can control his performance to create an emotional response within himself and those who observe him. With the Apostle Paul, the Tae Kwon Doist can truly say “Not as though I had already attained, neither were already perfect.”

The fundamentals to be presented are not milestones which one approaches, passes and leaves behind. The goal always remains ahead because, no matter how fast or strong or coordinated a movement is, it can always be done faster, stronger, with better coordination and better utilization of the chi. As the student progresses from the introductory level through the kyu (kup) ranks to the dan ranks, the obvious growing control of mind, body and spirit is entirely evident, if not tangible.

The fundamentals could be classified as:

- Focus
- Exhalation/breathing, power
- Concentration, strength
- Speed
- Relaxation
- Reflex
- Self-control, self-confidence
- Equilibrium.

Each will be discussed in further detail. As one studies each of these and reflects upon the characteristics of chi (Chapter 2) , it becomes evident that the underlying constructs for developing a mastery of Tae Kwon Do is the effective use of chi. A variety of techniques are taught in the Gospel Karate Team. These techniques are based primarily on Tae Kwon Do and each utilizes several of the fundamental aspects. How each of these specific techniques relates to the characteristics of chi can be seen in the chart of techniques (Chapter 6). Notice from this chart, if you leave out any of the three main aspects stressed in the Gospel Karate Team (mental, physical, and spiritual), you also omit essential training required to develop all the characteristics of chi.

Focus. The concentration of all one's energy on one specific target for one instant is called focusing. It is the combination of the mind, the breath and the body to zero in on the point of attack at the instant of impact. This principle is used in all punching, striking, blocking and kicking. The Tae Kwon Doist directs his training toward developing all the parts of his body so they will work together to concentrate all his physical force, mental power and spiritual energy at the point of contact at the time of impact. Applying the impact force onto the smallest target area concentrates the force and increases its effect.

Exhalation/Breathing. By exhalation, we mean to forcibly exhale at the moment of concentration of the physical output (focus). This is referred to as a kiai (a loud shout in Japanese). This yelling helps the student focus their energies as well as having a powerful stunning effect against an opponent. It is more than just yelling, for it is in essence, a chi technique. It is the energy of the practitioner exploding out of his body and in a “ki wave”

landing upon the opponent. The yell is not so much a trained activity (as for the beginners), but rather a result of the sheer exhilaration of a well performed technique. A word regarding the act of breathing. One of the difficulties with most of our breathing is that we give no thought to it. Consequently, as studies have shown, we use approximately one sixth of our lung capacity in normal breathing. The rest of the lungs are filled with fetid, stale air. The Tae Kwon Doist learns to ventilate his lungs by extremely deep breathing exercises. The force of the exhale comes from the tant'ien (lower abdomen). The deep breathing increases the lung capacity (strengthens endurance) and strengthens the tant'ien (the center of power). This in turn relaxes the student and allows his chi to flow more effectively. This enables a more powerful as well as a more sustained physical output. The proper breathing method is natural for a baby, but adults have "forgotten" how and breathe from the shoulders and chest rather than the tant'ien. The Tae Kwon Doist relearns this technique. An Oriental master referred to breathing as a "power gathering" to unify one's force to ward off an attack. Controlled breathing affects stamina, conditions the body to receive a blow, increases the power of a blow directed against an opponent, and conceals fatigue.

Power. All power comes from the waist area (reins, tant'ien, hara, tanden). The waist is like the center of a wheel, and the legs, hands, and elbows are like the spokes of the wheel, moving only because the center moves. Concentration is kept in the tant'ien, that area two inches below the navel that is considered the warehouse of chi. The mind moves the chi from this spot, and the chi makes the hands, feet, and rest of the body move, as if it were a fuel (inner strength). This enables the Tae Kwon Doist to be a self-contained unit. Following Newton's Third Law (for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction), the practitioner provides his own reaction. Reaction force is used to enhance the power of the student's technique. When punching with the right hand, the right fist travels straight forward to the target from the right hip while the left fist is pulled back to the hip from the extended position with the same velocity. This action/reaction revolves around the source of the chi (Tant' ien). Developed effectively, through continuous training, this chi enables shattering power to come with each blow, regardless of whether the student is firmly planted on the ground or in mid-air.

Concentration. The Tae Kwon Doist, in his exercises and particularly in his free sparring, must have his mind so concentrated on what he is doing that he is oblivious to all outside distractions. This situation has been likened to the tranquil pool in the woods. There is not a ripple upon its surface. Being completely calm, it reflects the trees, clouds and sky as if it were a mirror. Similarly, the controlled, tranquil, concentrated mind of the Tae Kwon Doist can in free fighting, reflect the mind of his opponent. In this situation, as soon as the impulse to attack passes through the mind of the opponent, it is reflected in one's own mind. The result is a counterattack occurring simultaneously with the attack, thus manifesting the lightness of the body and the spontaneity that are essential in chi. This is also what Funakoshi was referring to when he stated that the true martial artist never struck first. It would only appear that he hit the aggressor first, but in actuality he was responding to the aggressor's mental initiative to attack. There is no time to think. All training (mental, spiritual and physical) must prepare the student for the proper response

when faced with danger. In this light, over-reaction is as much a characteristic of a beginner as under reaction.

Strength. This is a function of the size and tone of one's muscles. While muscles can be built up by special exercises and techniques, raw physical strength is, in itself, of little use. It must be harnessed and concentrated in the right place at the right time. Proper application is the key, not brute strength.

Speed. Speed is the handmaiden of strength. The laws of physics teach that force is proportional to mass and the acceleration with which that mass is traveling. As a result, the impact of a blow increases not only with the size of the fist, but also with the increasing speed with which it arrives. This is why a "snapping" movement is made with the wrist just prior to making contact on a punch or block. Increasing the mass proportionally increases the power, but increasing the speed exponentially increases the power.

Another aspect is that the blow which arrives at its target before it can be countered is the only effective blow. Speed, just like chi is an equalizer in the martial arts.

Relaxation. The body is relaxed until the point of contact, and at this moment the tant'ien tightens completely and creates a chain reaction, with all the muscles of the body tightening as a unit. Referred to a "lock out", this happens for only a fraction of a second while the punch is executed, and then the body relaxes again, preparing for the next move. The action is like that of a bullwhip, where the whip goes out relaxed and fluid, but at the end becomes rigid and cracks. Failure to relax has three nullifying effects. First, fatigue, as the tense body is burning up energy to no avail. Second, reduced speed, as a blow initiated with muscles tight, will be so slow as to be a waste of time. Third, poor concentration; if the body is not relaxed, the mind will not be relaxed and the mind will be unable to concentrate to receive impressions and react.

Balance. All basics, forms and exercises develop and reinforce the requirement that all moves are initiated, executed and terminated in a position of balance. If a blow is delivered from a position of imbalance (around the tant'ien, hara, tanden) it will not only be ineffective, but leave the student in a vulnerable position.

By focusing on stance and center of gravity, equilibrium can be maintained while executing a technique. Whichever stance is being used, the legs are in tension, and a torque is produced to move the body. Torque is a measure of the turning action of a force. This force accelerates the arms and legs when executing a technique. To maintain equilibrium, the center of gravity should be as low as possible without hindering mobility.

Reflex. Attacks come quickly. There is little time to think. Sparring is certainly not the time, for example, to learn how to block a punch. These fundamentals must be practiced every day so that they are spontaneous and flow from the tant'ien with good focus. It is

only through years of repetitive practice that this can be mastered. That is a primary purpose of kata and through that effort, the chi level is increased.

Self-control. Teaching a student the physical capabilities to injure and kill without imparting the mental and spiritual control defies all that the traditional martial arts stands for. The classic example of a master is that no one even knows that he is one. There is no bragging and no pushing his weight around. The Bible teaches that one who does not have rule or control over his own actions is ultimately defenseless (prov. 25:28). Having developed a sense of inner peace and confidence, the true martial artist is at rest with his God and those around him.

Self-confidence. Fear and chi cannot coexist, just as fear and faith are mutually exclusive (Luke 18: 1). Chi begins to flow as the confidence level increases. This occurs slowly and with determination as a student learns to punch, practices punching with a partner, learns to block and punch in one-step sparring, free spars slowly, and free spars with advanced students. This will produce a sense of capability and confidence. The objective is to control the fear so that free flowing movement and liquid thought can be obtained.

State of Equilibrium. As has been stated throughout this booklet, an imbalance in any of the three cardinal tenets of “do” in the life of a practitioner leaves him less than a man and in no way resembles a true martial artist. He must be physically developed, mentally awake and alert, and spiritually in control of his life.

5. Summary

In summary, ki/chi is not a mystical ethereal force. It is not some fourth dimensional entity. Ki/chi is the cumulative energy to be gained by developing the spiritual, mental and physical elements of the human being.

It involves a close spiritual relationship with God, the development of strong character, an unimpaired mind that is being intellectually stimulated, a healthy body and constant practice of physical technique.

A consistent attention to these fundamentals, a pedantic attention to kata practice and the development of righteous character traits will in turn produce chi in the life of the martial artist.

6. Chart of Techniques

Dojo Techniques --->	B a s i c s	P r a y e r	L i m b e r i n g	F a s t i n g	F o r m s	M e m o r i z a t i o n	B r e a k i n g	E t i q u e	N e r v e C e n t e r s	D e v o t i o n s	L o c k & R e l e a s e	O n e S t e p s	S p a r i n g	W e a p o n s
Chi Characteristics that are Developed ↓ ↓ V														
Focus on inner strength	x	x		x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	
Utilize the soft			x		x				x	x	x		x	
In harmony/balance with the creation		x		x		x		x		x				
Yeilding to the rigid			x		x						x	x	x	
Clear meridians (muscles, joints, cardiovascular)	x		x		x		x							x
Develop the Will (heart)		x		x		x		x		x				
Effortlessness			x		x				x		x		x	x
Spontaneity					x	x					x	x	x	x
Channel energies for efficiency	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Breathe from tant'ien	x		x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x
Meditation in position		x								x				
Respect for authority		x				x		x		x				x
Relaxation	x		x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x
Solid stances	x				x		x		x		x	x	x	x
Circular motions	x		x		x				x		x	x	x	x
Control of fear	x	x			x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Righteous lifestyle		x		x		x		x		x				

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