

Know the Good News of Christian Spirituality

Not only have most people on the planet never heard the good news of Christian spirituality, I am doubtful whether even many churchgoers have heard it clearly presented. And some who have heard it thousands of times are tentative when asked about it.

Christian spirituality begins with one of the most important words in the Bible. That word is gospel, which is the English translation of the New Testament Greek word that literally means "good news." But as essential as the gospel is to Christianity, I have often encountered an embarrassing silence whenever I have asked church groups, "What is the gospel?"

Let me ask you. Suppose you were going to write the gospel in a paragraph or so and send it to a friend in an email or letter. Could you do it? Confidently? Why would it be "good news"?

One of the places where the Bible summarizes the gospel is in 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. The heart of this passage tells us "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures" (verses 3-4). So the gospel that produces genuine Christian spirituality is that Jesus Christ died, taking the guilt of sinners and the wrath of God upon Himself, and was raised bodily from the dead to show that the Father accepted His death for others and removed their sins. Christ's substitutionary death for sinners is the measure of His love and His resurrection from the dead is the stunning confirmation that all He said and did is true.

This is good news—the best possible news—because it demonstrates, among so many other things, the willingness of the God we had sinned against countless times to draw us to Himself, to engage in an intimate relationship with us. It means that He has done in Christ what we couldn't have done for ourselves, opening the door for us to come in faith and to experience all the indescribable riches of fellowship with God, and thereby become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

Do you know—by experience—this good news?

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