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Experiential Christianity

As stated on the 'home' page, when the teaching stories and parables of Jesus were first spoken there were no Christian beliefs and constructs to evaluate them. Thus, this book analytically reexamines those teaching stories and parables as they were initially presented, free of developed constructs and beliefs, to demonstrate their experiential intent. This reexamination unveils a covert direction within those stories and parables that is concealed in full view. Rediscovering and unveiling that direction opens doors to reveal an empirical foundation for living that is available to everyone. In brief, the message of Jesus is examined as it was given.

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Humankind appears to be heading toward an age where polarization of ideas, beliefs, and constructs create defining boundaries that control the very people that propagate them, without those individuals being aware of that control. The result is border wars - idea versus idea, belief versus belief, and construct versus construct - on multiple levels of existence. Those 'border wars' arise as the held content is transformed into both a weapon and a shield: protecting itself from any real or imagined attack while simultaneously used to attack others holding dissimilar content. The result of these 'bordered content wars' is the slowing, or even halting, of a potentially enlightened civilization from developing to its absolute capacity. Everyone, in some manner, knowingly or unknowingly suffers because of that underdevelopment as ethical standards slowly erode because moral guidelines underpinning the ethics are equally underdeveloped. With deficient moral guidelines and ethical standards no one is safe; creating communities that mentally, and potentially physically, survive in various forms of insecurity and fear.

Ideally, religions are expected to develop a moral foundation allowing each to establish individual ethical standards. In turn, that ethical stance becomes the testing ground for the moral foundation, making both experiential. However, is that ideal an actuality or have religions trapped themselves within their historically developed doctrine by a restrictive interpretation of the content it was founded upon? That entrapment can occur as the content, maintained and protected by ritual and devotional methodology, establish self-containing borders that define the doctrine making the doctrine self-sustaining. For all its value, and there is value to restriction, those restrictive borders potentially deprive their parishioners from discovering experiential pathways that would confirm what they believe? Or, has devotional religion, relying upon ritual and dogma, developed into a 'construct' that no longer connects with the practical needs of a population that has acquired mental freedom but has no experiential appreciation of an underpinning responsibility for that liberty beyond legal consequences?

In today's world, religion appears to be losing its controlling power. This sets conditions for the opposite to occur, as restrictive fundamentalism can arise to take its place, directly and indirectly imposing itself upon others. As well, various forms of new age spirituality or inquiry develop, along with many and varied psychological methodologies providing relief to new forms of stress and distress. In addition, the vacuum created when religious control departs is potentially filled with superficial stimulation provided by various forms of visual, mental, and sensual gratification, which is an endless form of entrapment.

Does this gradual move away from a religious fraternity, which solely relies upon restrictive doctrine and ritual, suggest a need for non-restrictive experiential processes to be incorporated? And, if such an inclusion did occur how would it be integrated and function? Also, would that addition appeal to those who have drifted away from religion, as well as to those that are spiritually inquiring? Accordingly, how would a non-restrictive inclusion revamp a restrictive doctrine to establish a universally acceptable instructional foundation for existence that is logically and experientially self-confirming? Meaning, what form must any new non-restrictive content take to make restrictive doctrine acceptable or unobjectionable to those that cannot intellectually and/or emotionally accommodate that form of control. This is where the original teaching stories and parables of Jesus once again become relevant as they can be restrictively or non-restrictively interpreted. Consequently, restrictive content that is devotionally focused upon the messenger can be aligned with non-restrictive experiential processes that are exclusively focused upon the message. In this manner, both restriction and non-restriction can be contained within one doctrine without one dominating the other, illuminating the wisdom of how those teaching stories and parables were presented.

Thus, for two thousand years the answers to all of the foregoing questions and problems have remained buried within devotional Christianity. Its devotional and ritualistic practices focusing upon the messenger and relying upon restrictive doctrine have ignored the experiential arm of that religion. This does not make devotional Christianity wrong, just self-contained and so potentially self-limiting. Meaning, a single-minded devotional focus tends to lean toward locking thought into fundamental avenues establishing conditions that can destroy in the guise of preserving, which is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. That form of focus potentially blinds its adherents to its experiential foundation, which is why those individuals are not even aware such an arm existed. However, the experiential arm is where the answers to those preceding perplexing problems, questions, and life in general, exist.

Devotional Christianity officially began in 325 AD, which is the same time experiential Christianity was buried, and has remained interned to the present day. Hence, the answers to the foregoing difficult questions have remained unanswerable because of that internment. Even though experiential Christianity and devotional Christianity, if the devotion is applied with unrestricted honesty, head toward an identical destination they appear to run on parallel

tracks until that end is reached where they eventually merge as one. Observing that divergence - focus upon the messenger or focus upon the message - reveals two different worlds founded upon the same thing. Thus, are actualized differently, exposing the differentiation between devotional and experiential Christianity as devotional Christianity can be perceived to be for the general populace whilst experiential Christianity is for the individual.

An example of experiential Christianity is revealed by Jesus when he stated, 'God is within you', which is an astonishing statement. Devotional Christianity generally skims over the surface of that statement making it 'one of the many elephants in the room'. However, Experiential Christianity delves into the heart of that statement to discover its meaning which is where genuine understanding is achieved. Raising the questions where does God reside within and what does that entity do? The book resolves those questions: as well, it explores the experiential intent within the teaching stories and parables of Jesus. That investigative process, without relying upon any form of restrictive dogma, delineates how to use the teachings of Jesus to develop experiential moral guidelines preventing ethical standards from being manipulated by self-interest. This is achieved by what can best be described as using resolution psychology standing upon a foundation formed from experiential philosophy to unveil the 'how' and 'why' of existence. Meaning, a statement such as 'God is within you' must be logically and/or analytically understood and contain sufficient experiential information to confirm the logic. This entails knowing the structural makeup of consciousness, subliminal and activated self-awareness, and the components of mind, creating a framework to know how those elements function and interrelate. Hence, the book *Experiential Christianity* provides the tools to investigate, and so know, your existence; its beginning, middle, and what the end brings, which is what Jesus taught by way of teaching stories and parables.

Those analytical tools also expose why Jesus left nothing in writing. That deliberate omission is a veiled clue pointing at the essence of all his teachings. When you are aware of those 'tools' and use them correctly the teaching stories and parables are 'brought to life' by understanding their concealed experiential meaning. This new insightful vision reveals an entirely new vista of existence that was shrouded under heavy layers of dogma and ritual. Like a breath of fresh air that revitalizing vision reinvigorates life with the discovery of an internally embedded direction within consciousness. That discovery is identifying the 'living' truth that 'God is within you'. Hence, the importance of experiential Christianity as it redefines your life: experienced as being reborn. This 'living' definition provides a safe pathway through life as you effortlessly become a reflection of his teachings, which is the message.

This experiential approach to Christianity will appeal to those who have abandoned their religion by themselves feeling experientially abandoned by it. It will also appeal to those who have never been an active participant in any religion but are searching for directional meaning in their life that is founded upon logic and is experientially verifiable. It also supports devotional parishioners as it provides an experiential foundation for their beliefs that will not twist ethical standards by the deceit hidden within self-interest and self-

aggrandizement. This new or rediscovered foundation provides stability in life as it reveals an impersonal direction innate with consciousness. That direction is a gift that only requires you to open it. Once opened its intrinsic direction is revealed making what is impersonally embedded within consciousness personally yours. That connection opens internal doors that may initially have appeared permanently shut. Therefore, it is endlessly surprising that that gift is generally left unopened as most are not even aware it exists. However, by knowingly releasing the restrictive 'strings' that bind and contain it you discover the reality that 'God is within you', which is the gift. Hence, the need for experiential processes to learn how to open that gift and this book provides all the tools for that internal adventure. Using them is your decision.

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(Experiential Christianity has 448 pages)

1- Paperback costs \$35.00 Australian plus shipping

2- E-book in PDF format costs \$15.00 Australian