

Daily Meditation 02/16/2023

On the Cosmic Christ in Early Christianity, part ...

Good morning.

In today's video we continue to probe for the reason why the Cosmic Christ has been neglected in the West. And with it, mysticism because the Cosmic Christ is the primary archetype of Christian mysticism.

And I mentioned Krister Stendahl, a very fine Lutheran biblical theologian, who was Dean of the Harvard Divinity School for years. And he talks about how

our age and that of the first century have more in common than we think. Both times can be characterized as cosmically scared, frightened, ages, caught under principalities and powers where tiny little human beings just know that they cannot do much, that they are not in control: they are just caught.

And he comments on the anthropology of 20th century religion, and he criticizes Rudolf Bultmann. He says:

We Christians happen to be more interested in ourselves than in God, or in the fate of God's creation....Rudolf Bultmann's whole theological enterprise has one great mistake, from which all others emanate: he takes for granted that basically the center of gravity -- the center from which all interpretation springs -- is anthropology, the doctrine of man.

So you see where cosmology coming in, in our time is so important to move us out from our loss of mysticism and the Cosmic Christ, to a sense of the cosmos.

Now Krister Stendahl and I met one day, because he came to a workshop I was doing on the Cosmic Christ. He was in his 80s at the time, I was in my young 40s, I believe. I was very honored that he was there. And he'd just had a hip operation design, was using a cane. But he came up to me afterwards and he participated fully including in our circle dances, cane and all. He came up to me afterwards and he said,

I'm here because I'm really excited about your creation spirituality movement, and bringing the cosmos back and creation back, and the Cosmic Christ back.

And he said,

You know, every time you see the word 'Basilea' (which is a Greek word that we translate as 'kingdom' in the Bible), you have a right to translate it as 'creation.'

So this is Jesus' central message, isn't it? The kingdom of God is among you, the queendom of God is among you. It is within you, and it's among you. Not will be, but it is here. That is just important, foundational, that Krister Stendhal, said that "creation" and "Basilea" are synonyms in the New Testament.

And of course, he is not alone. Father Schillebeeckx, great Dutch theologian, says that the first century was a time when the people had great interest in the cosmos. And again, this is why the Cosmic Christ texts and the wisdom texts are so central to so much of the teachings in the in the New Testament, and it really is amazing how far Christianity has wandered from this sense of the cosmos, being the center of healthy religion and spirituality.

After all, Genesis one is a cosmology and it's also about the goodness of creation and even culminates in the phrase, the very goodness of creation... Genesis one is where the Bible begins. And John one is parallel to that; it too is a creation story.

So all these testimonies teach us how important it is to recover this archetype of the Cosmic Christ.

And Joseph Sittler, also a Lutheran theologian. have complained that 17th- century Christianity "turned down the blaze." Those are his words:

...turned down the blaze of the... vision [of the Cosmic Christ] so radically that it...was effective only as a moral or mystical incandescence.

That, again, the Christian Church lost the sense of the excitement, and the mystery, and the energy, and power of the cosmos, the sacredness of the cosmos.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.