

Title: Christian Spirituality
Pastor: Dr Vinay Samuel
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Ephesians 5:1-2

¹ Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

I Corinthians 4:16

¹⁶ Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

Introduction

- Spirituality is not our belief system but our belief shaped attitudes, feelings, and practices in relation to God and Society.
- Spirituality is expressed in attitudes and practices and is not meant for self fulfillment but for mission.
- It is the expression of losing one's life in mission service to save it.

1. Spirituality that reflects the Trinity

- The description of the biblical God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit has two poles – Embassy and Hospitality: Reaching out and Welcoming in.
- The mutual indwelling and interpenetration of the Trinity (the father in me and I in the father) reveals the state of abiding in love and going out in love.

a: Spirituality of the Father's House – Luke 15:11-31

- Contrasting spiritualities of the father and the elder son - v12.
- The father released the younger son having counted the cost, waited, welcomed and embraced - v20, generosity of love - v20-22, enabled life - v24.
- The elder son sees his identity as a slave focused on the law. He was not able to try freedom, risk death and did not know what it means to be lost and found.

b: Spirituality of the Son's self-giving – Ephesians 5:1-2

- A life of fragrant offering, a life of love descending and ascending.
- Spirituality of descent: reaching out to the most vulnerable.
- Spirituality of ascent: reaching out to the Father in prayer lifting the world to him.
- Spirituality of engagement and retreat, of suffering and self-offering. It is the incarnation of love.

c: Spirituality of the Holy Spirit's giving – John 14:15-20

- The twin states of the Spirit: Truth and Love
- The twin gifts: encouragement and empowerment.
- The Spirit enables abiding in truth and love and enables acting in confidence and spiritual power.
- A spirituality of the spirit is expressed in spiritual fruits and gifts, it communicates the energy of the Spirit.

2. The Spirituality of the Kingdom – Matthew 5:3-10

- It is the spirituality that reflects Christ's rule.
- Poverty of Spirit and Purity of Heart.
- Mourning for ourselves; meekness before God and others
- Hunger for God and mercy toward others
- Peace-making and paying the price for righteousness.

Spiritual practices of the Kingdom – Luke 9:2-6; 22:24-30

- In Luke Kingdom spirituality is the spirituality of the Kingdom journey. It is a spirituality of the pilgrim road.

- Jesus lays the table; Hospitality.
- Jesus sends the disciples in simplicity.
- Jesus describes himself as a servant: servanthood.

3. **The Spirituality of the New Creation – II Corinthians 5:16 - 6:10**

- This is the framework of spirituality in Paul's teaching.
- Spirituality of the New: Old things pass away, the new is received and experienced.
- Abiding in the new but still struggling with the old and straining for more of the new.
- Abiding and Straining are the twin states of the new creation.

a: Spirituality of Reconciliation

- We are drawn into a state of reconciliation.
- It implies that no longer live for ourselves but commend ourselves not as successes but servants.
- Our spirituality reflects the duality of our status; we are dying yet we live; beaten not killed; sorrowful and yet rejoicing; have everything yet nothing.
- Engage the real world from our place in the world to come – II Corinthians 5:16.
- Living out the resurrection order in the present world.
- Living out in anticipation driven by hope.
- Anticipating the future and seeking to express its reality in the present in personal and social practices.

b: Spirituality of the New Creation

- Dealing with conflict from the resources of the new creation: The ministry of peace building.
- Openness to the spirit doing a new thing.
- Practicing God's Presence: identifying God at work in our midst.
- Building other peoples spiritualities; affirming, challenging and transforming their spiritual experiences.

Conclusion

Three questions:

- To Adam: Where are you?
- To Peter: Who do you think I am?
- To the disciples: Where are you going?