



Why Spirituality?

Isn't it enough that we learn all we can about God and the plan of salvation which includes Jesus as God's response to the broken world and our own broken lives?

That, of course, is a typical misconceived notion which demonstrates the way we short circuit God's plan for us. There is so much more that is critical. Faith is not *what* or *how much* we know *about* God but about actually *knowing* God.

To counteract this prevalent misconception it helps to go back in our thinking to the Biblical story of God's original plan and action as depicted in the story of Adam and Eve. What exactly is the message there?

Clearly the story reveals that God's intent was—and is—to create a close and viable relationship with those persons who had been created in God's own image as differentiated from the rest of creation. That from all evidence was why humankind was created—relationship.

We know all too well the outcome of that story as it appears in Genesis as well as it shows up in our own lives. It is not a pretty picture. God's original intent, however, was to have a loving relationship that would bring joy to both God and humankind.

That relationship is what spirituality is all about. It is not about meditation or stillness or listening to the direction of the Holy Spirit. These acts are *functions* of spirituality. They are important ways to pursue a spiritual journey with God. Nevertheless, the significance of spirituality itself lies within the journey with the Holy One. It is becoming more and more *aware* of living close to God every moment of every day.

We are certainly called to love and serve our neighbors. That is the way we serve and please God making the world a better place. The inspiration, energy and direction for that piece, however, come from the dynamics of our relationship with the Holy One.

For us to please God by serving our neighbor, we must first nourish the original relationship God has established with us—remembering the Genesis story, and why we are here in the first place. If the strength of our relationship with God is compromised by our inattention, we then become less effective in all else that we do, and the world suffers the loss. God has established a life-giving relationship with us. It is our responsibility to nourish it.

It is exactly the same as losing oxygen on an airline flight and our putting on our own oxygen mask first, before we attempt to help anyone else.

