

A little introduction

I do not like to write. The thought of starting a blog brings me back to the horrors of my high school English classes. At my very core I am an engineer who can solve a problem in a variety of computer programming languages, but who quakes when asked to be creative in writing. At my very core I am also tasked with being a spiritual guide who is trying to help a small group of people navigate down a rather tricky river here in the northwest. So I have to put these two things together so we can try to solve a few problems while we're here.

There's some conflict within.... Still hidden within me is a skeptical agnostic humanist with a zeal to see the pure ethics of life lived out to perfection. But today, the dominant side of that dialectic is a person who can see beneath the mask of this world and find the Divine working in and through the fabric of the universe all around. But alas, it is often the conflicted ones who might be able to bring sanity to this chaotic world. I feel this tension helps me check myself along the way. How is this so? Every time I attempt to demonstrate a spiritual concept that can help a person down their path of life, I ask myself if this would make any sense to an outsider, to one whom I have not yet earned their trust.

So why am I writing?☐

I am writing because the world I live in is experiencing a spiritual crisis. The news lately has been highlighting how people my age and younger (Gen-X and Gen-Y) are dropping out of the religious establishment that their parents and grandparents took for granted. Sadly, I don't blame them. Religious institutions have failed us. We see the rampant hypocrisy through leader's and follower's infidelity to the ideals they espouse. We see institutions built on the idea that size and income define success and that belonging to such will bring to us personally more of the same. These institutions are built so that people who don't really want to think for themselves can have a safe controlled place to belong and be justified in their own excesses. That's not for me; it's not what I signed up for when I came to believe and rely on God. That's not what God is about and I think that what I've read about Him shows that.

See article from ABCNews:☐

[Young Americans Losing Their Religion : New Research Finds Number Who Claim No Church Has Risen Sharply](#)

So where are these young people going? Are they all turning into skeptical agnostic humanists, or is something else happening? According to the data out there, they are not leaving the concept of "God," rather their practice, such as it is, is going behind closed doors. If you ask many of these people if they are "religious" they will likely say "no, but I AM spiritual." This is one of our clear indications that our religious institutions have failed this and many other generations. There are an enormous amount of seekers out there, but they each are finding their way on their own path. Don't get me wrong, this is an essential part of spiritual growth but I believe it is missing a few critical pieces to make it meaningful.

So what's missing?□

I think the primary thing is the dynamic of the shared journey. My observation is that those who end up seeking connection with God only on their own terms won't be seeking Him long. I've met a few exceptions to this, but not many. We all need some level of accountability whether it is peer to peer or student to mentor. In both these kind of relationships, we learn from each other and it makes both sharper. But, you may ask, isn't that the purpose of organized religion - to create some system where we are all accountable? Yes, that's true but there always seem to be egos that get in the way. We start creating pecking orders and cliques and then the system fails its ideals.

The true way to find "enlightenment" is to do it together with people you grow to trust. The proper shared experience creates a community which humbly learns from the highest and lowest at the same time. A healthy community is transparent and learns from its mistakes.

As you can imagine, I have a few more ideas about this building of community. That's why I'm writing this blog. I'd like to find a few more seekers out there who are interested in finding the Divine resources at our disposal to make our lives more meaningful. Among the seekers already around me, I find their growth in our community quite inspirational. It is a growth that none of us could accomplish on our own, but only when we come together humbly before the Creator searching for the meaning and purpose of our lives.