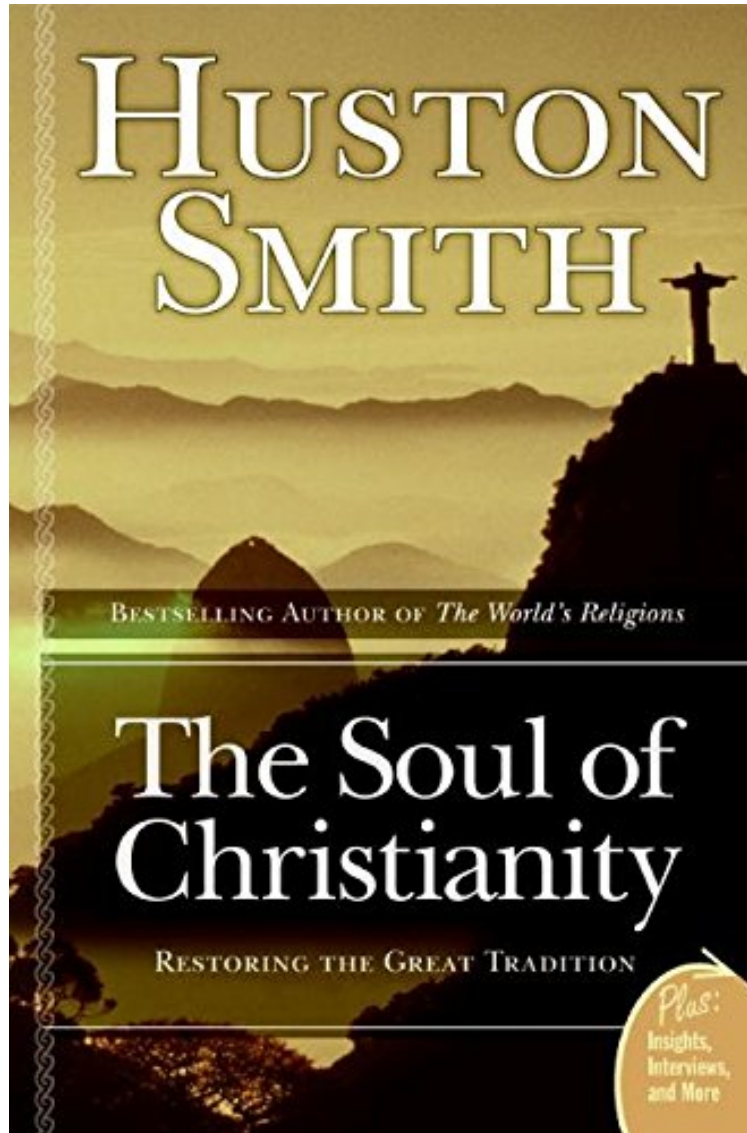


[Download pdf] The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Tradition (Plus)

The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Tradition (Plus)

Huston Smith

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Huston Smith : The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Tradition (Plus) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Tradition (Plus):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Smith convincingly argues that we need a radically theistic world-view. Nothing else will ultimately satisfy.By Amos SmithI learned a great deal from this book.Smith accurately points

out that human beings are hard-wired for transcendence. That is what we yearn for instinctively. Smith also writes that liberal churches often don't offer transcendence. Instead they offer rallying cries to be good, which ultimately doesn't satisfy. And as a result of this approach many liberal churches are digging their own graves. We need a radically theistic world-view, which is the legacy of the Christian Mystics. An emphasis on justice is essential, yet without a theistic world view at the center, we miss the mark. -Amos Smith (author of *Healing The Divide*)

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A valuable review Christianity's contribution to world religions

By Titillated

An outstanding review of the core strengths of Christianity and the ways cultural developments in the 20th and early 21st centuries have impacted Christianity. It is clarifying to read a synthesis from a longtime dedicated Christian who is also the most sympathetic and knowledgeable student of all the major world faiths.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three Stars

By Customer

This book summarizes Christian beliefs. If you are a Christian you might pick up a few bits of new information.

"I have tried to describe a Christianity which is fully compatible with everything we now know, and to indicate why Christians feel privileged to give their lives to it." Huston Smith

In his most personal and passionate book on the spiritual life, renowned author, scholar, and teacher of world religions Huston Smith turns to his own life-long religion, Christianity. With stories and personal anecdotes, Smith not only presents the basic beliefs and essential teachings of Christianity, but argues why religious belief matters in today's secular world. Though there is a wide variety of contemporary interpretations of Christianity, some of them conflicting, Smith cuts through these to describe Christianity's "Great Tradition," the common faith of the first millennium of believers, which is the trunk of the tree from which Christianity's many branches, twigs, and leaves have grown. This is not the exclusivist Christianity of strict fundamentalists, nor the liberal, watered-down Christianity practiced by many contemporary churchgoers. In exposing biblical literalism as unworkable as well as enumerating the mistakes of modern secularists, Smith presents the very soul of a real and substantive faith, one still relevant and worth believing in. Smith rails against the hijacked Christianity of politicians who exploit it for their own needs. He decries the exercise of business that widens the gap between rich and poor, and fears education has lost its sense of direction. For Smith, the media has become a business that sensationalizes news rather than broadening our understanding, and art and music have become commercial and shocking rather than enlightening. Smith reserves his harshest condemnation, however, for secular modernity, which has stemmed from the misreading of science: the mistake of assuming that "absence of evidence" of a scientific nature is "evidence of absence." These mistakes have all but banished faith in transcendence and the Divine from mainstream culture and pushed it to the margins. Though the situation is grave, these modern misapprehensions can be corrected, says Smith, by reexamining the great tradition of Christianity's first millennium and reaping the lessons it holds for us today. This fresh examination of the Christian worldview, its history, and its major branches provides the deepest, most authentic vision of Christianity: one that is both tolerant and substantial, traditional and relevant.

From Publishers Weekly

An intriguing combination of apologia, early church history and cultural critique, this deeply personal book attempts to convey the foundations of Christian thought in a way that appeals to modern readers seeking authentic faith in a secular culture. The devotional tone is a distinct departure for Smith, a philosopher and prominent scholar of world religions. This may account for the erudite and occasionally rambling quality of the book's first section, where Smith delineates the "fixed points" of a Christian worldview; he uses science, psychology, the arts, Platonic philosophy and medieval theology to meditate on the nature of reality and the order of the universe. As Smith takes on the "shaky foundation" of modern culture, one of his central tenets is that modern culture has not been able to "distinguish absence-of-evidence from evidence-of-absence." The book's longest section is Smith's summary of the life and significance of Jesus, the history of the early church and various theological matters such as the Trinity and the nature of heaven and hell. While parts are relatively straightforward, Smith's use of anecdotes and willingness to make his own idiosyncratic interpretations of major doctrines of the Christian faith mean that this section cannot be read as a simple digest of previous scholarship. (Sept.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist

Renowned religious scholar Smith believes we are living through the second of two great revolutions. The first, that of the scientific method that emerged in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, he proclaims was disastrous for the human spirit. The current revolution he deems constructive because it allows us to see where secularism went wrong, making the twentieth century an era of violence, not progress, and rendering the institutions of contemporary culture unstable at best. He examines basic Christianity by writing about what Christianity means to him and how it has shaped his life and beliefs in three chapters that eruditely discuss, respectively, the Christian worldview, the Christian story (encompassing the historical Jesus, the Christ of faith, the Resurrection, the Mystical Body of Christ, and the Incarnation, among other topics), and the three branches of Christianity today (Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism). In revealing his own religious beliefs, Smith offers a Christian primer filtered through the mind of a brilliant interpreter. June Sawyers

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It is fascinating to read a great scholar of world religions expressing clearly and directly his own Christian faith. (John Polkinghorne)

Huston Smith is the wisest, sanest religious scholar of them

all, and so wonderfully readable. (Anne Lamott, author of *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*) If one is looking for a short, friendly introduction to what makes Christianity what it is, this is it. (Los Angeles Times) A bracingly clear overview of Christianity... (Dallas Morning News) What [Smith] advocates is essentially a modernized and tolerant interpretation of the shared faith of Christianity's first thousand years... (Associated Press)