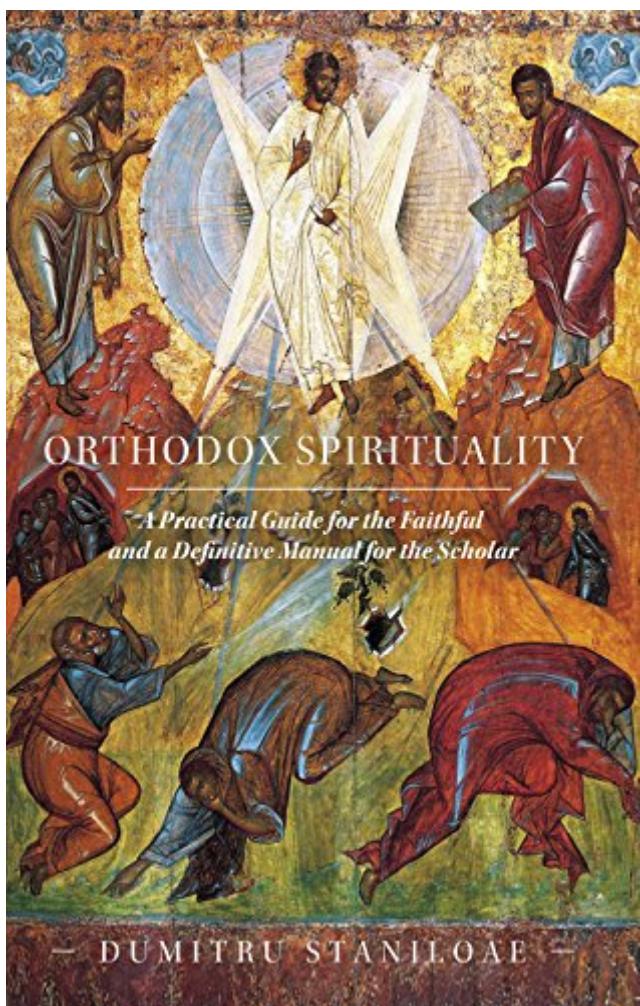


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Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide For The Faithful And A Definitive Manual For The Scholar



Synopsis

Orthodox spirituality has as its goal the deification of man and his union with God, without being merged with Him. It has as a basic conviction the existence of a personal God, who is the supreme source of radiating love. He prizes man and doesn't want to confuse him with Himself, but maintains and raises him to an eternal dialogue of love. Such a spirituality has no place where an evolutionary progress of man, connected to a divinity conceived as an impersonal essence, is affirmed. This progress can have no result other than man's disappearance in the impersonal divinity. But the personal God, and thus the supreme source of love, can't be conceived of as a single person, but as a community of persons in a perfect unity. You see then why the Christian teaching of a Trinity of Persons in a unity of essence is the only one which can constitute the basis of a perfect spirituality for man, understood as a full communion with God in love, without his being lost in it. Dumitru Staniloae, Orthodox Spirituality It should be remembered, especially in the Western context, that the roots of Christian theology are not only Western, but reach deeply into the theological mind and the living Christian experience of the Orthodox East. Before the medieval political and cultural schism between the Latin and Greek worlds and the subsequent Protestant Reformation, the Christian West was itself, in fact, Orthodox, part and parcel of one united, albeit admittedly bi-polar, Byzantine Commonwealth. In our own time, as Western culture once again gradually comes to recognition of the "Eastern" Orthodox Church as being existentially part of its own root tradition, the imperative of discovering common ground and defining a common frame of reference relative to essentials of Christian spiritual life arises as a matter of some urgency. -Alexander Golubov, Foreword, Orthodox Spirituality

Book Information

File Size: 1250 KB

Print Length: 397 pages

Publisher: St. Tikhon's Monastery Press; 1st edition (January 18, 2013)

Publication Date: January 18, 2013

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00B2YF6J8

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

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Customer Reviews

In spite of the translation issues (always a difficulty) and the formatting issues (I speak of the digital version), this is a work of staggering impact. Fr. Staniloae gives us a loving and vividly written guide through theosis and the wonder of the most ancient teaching of the Church on what salvation is within Christianity. Simultaneously, he sweeps away many misconceptions regarding theosis, and ably balances various concepts that, to some, create "problems" within the Fathers. The introduction, too, is masterful in clearing up mistakes regarding the use of the word "spirituality" and how its misapplication within the modern world should not "scare off" Orthodox from embracing it. I would NOT recommend this book to anyone who has not at least some solid understanding of the Orthodox view of theosis and, more to the point, would not recommend it for anyone who is not Orthodox (especially inquirers). Given the heavy subject matter the book deals with as well as the depth into which Fr. Staniloae dives I would say that it is a text that is more for someone who has spent some years in the Church. That said, it is a wonderful book!

An excellent work of summarizing the basics of Orthodox spirituality. I highly recommend it to those seeking to deepen their understanding of the subject.

A wonderful book for both Orthodox & non-Orthodox Christians. It will remain an excellent bedside reference work. I highly recommend it in addition to any other book by Staniloae.

This book is not easy reading for someone looking for an introduction to Christian Spirituality (and, "Yes, Virginia there is such a thing as Christian Spirituality"). However, anyone who has read and comprehended Evelyn Underhill's Mysticism (ISBN 1-85168-196-5), and Bernard McGinn's Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism (ISBN 0-8129-7421-2) should find Fr. Staniloae's work a "had to

read it" kind of experience.

THE book on Orthodox Spirituality.

The quintessential guide to understanding the ascetic tradition of eastern Orthodoxy

Very readable, for such a deep subject.

Excellent book!

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