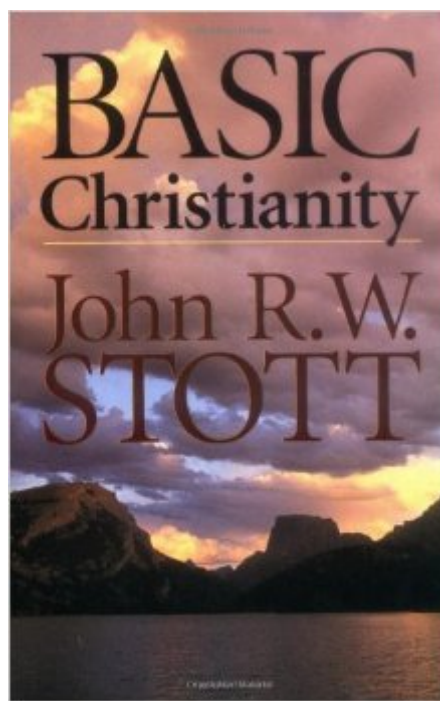


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Basic Christianity



Synopsis

John R. W. Stott defends the fundamental claims of Christianity and defines the proper outworkings of these beliefs in the lives of believers. Here is a sound guide for those seeking an intellectually satisfying presentation of the Christian faith.

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Customer Reviews

Stott, John R.W. Basic Christianity. Downers Grove: IVP, 1971. 142 pages. Dr. John R.W. Stott was born in London in 1921. Dr. Stott holds a multitude of educational degrees, including French, theology, and various doctorate and honorary doctorates in theology. He has written over thirty books on various theological and religious topics and eight biblical expositions for the Bible Speaks Today commentary series. He has attended All Souls Place (home church) in London since his childhood. He has currently held the position rector emeritus since 1975. He continues to preach at the church several times throughout the year. Billy Graham has stated that Dr. Stott is "the most respected clergy man in the world today." One of his earlier publishing's, Basic Christianity, was first written in 1958 and has sold over two and a half million copies and has been translated into more

than 63 languages. Dr. Stott shows the reader that there is much hostility towards the 'institution' of the church. It is not that this hostility is geared toward Christ Himself, but against the structure or the organization called 'the church' and its fallible managers. The younger generation that is growing up, whether organic to the church or implanted from other religions, is seeking less and less the credentials that make Christianity true and valid. He feels that many are making too much of the mind knowledge of Christianity and identifying less and less with the actions of Christianity. In essence, it seems he is stating that the culture at large is living a static or nominal Christianity where its participants are just identifiers and not spokesmen. The believers of the movement are only passively wearing the title Christian and not living a life of dynamism for Jesus.

Basic Christianity is just that and more. Stott writes with the purpose to simply inform the novice. He does this in a way that is easy to read, and without a propensity for big theological words. First and foremost the author centres on Jesus Christ, His person, and work. The chapters 5 and 6 explain from the Bible the deity of Christ, both His direct and indirect claims to be God in man. The author's argument is uncomfortable when he calls Jesus claims to deity egocentric; for that would make Jesus a phony. Nevertheless, the author continues to unpack his fundamental disposition supporting Jesus' claims of deity as true. The point being that if Jesus' claims are not true, then He was a phony and no global people movement such as the church could be sustained for 2 millennium based on the distorted word of an egomaniac. The author answers the central question of "Who needs Christ?" Stott does this by describing sin in a basic way, as pride and self-deification among its other Biblical definitions. Sin has sadly cut mankind off from God to the point that people perceive God as angry and far away. This then, is why people need Christ, to bring them back into fellowship with God. Therefore, Christ's unselfish sacrifice is the peace-making event that restores fellowship with God. This Easter triumph inaugurates the age of the promised Holy Spirit and the beginning of the church. In the last chapter called "Man's Response" I found many helpful pointers for the novice. Stott points out that being born in a so-called Christian nation is not enough for salvation, but the seeking individual must open one's heart to Jesus to be saved.

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