Spirituality in Aotearoa/ New Zealand

On Sunday I outlined where my Masters research is heading. The topic of my thesis considers the spiritual experience of people who self-describe as spiritual but not religious compared with the spiritual experience of people who self-describe as practicing a Christian Spirituality.

Part of what has sparked my interest in the topic is the increasing number of people who indicate ‘no religion’ on census forms. I mentioned a recent article on Newshub that summarised the scene in New Zealand, you can find that article here:


There were a number of books that I referred to on Sunday so if you’re interested in exploring them in more detail here’s a list:

The Spiritual Landscape in New Zealand:


*Long, White and Cloudy: The Search for a Kiwi Spirituality*, John Bluck

https://www.amazon.com/Long-White-Cloudy-Search-Spirituality/dp/1877161438/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1487643236&s=books&sr=1-1&keywords=Long+white+and+cloudy

Both of the above books are dated now, but give some background to the cultural context for the emergence of the spiritual but not religious in New Zealand. For a more recent examination of the development of the kiwi context see Kevin Ward, “Christianity and the Church in New Zealand since 1960: sociological perspectives”, in *Sacred Histories in Secular New Zealand*, edited by Geoff Troughton and Stuart Lange.


Also referenced was Lillian Daniels book *When Spiritual but not religious is not enough: Finding God in Surprising Places, Even the Church*. Daniels writes from the American context and her book is a collection of, often humorous, stories and anecdotes about spirituality.

https://www.amazon.com/When-Spiritual-but-Religious-Enough/dp/B01L98Y75K
I also explored some expressions of Christian Spirituality. There is a myriad of writing on this topic, but here’s the authors I referred to on Sunday:

**Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology**, Eugene Peterson


**Ecstasy and Intimacy: When the Holy Spirit Meets the Human Spirit**, Edith Humphrey


**Body: Biblical Spirituality for the Whole Person.** Paula Gooder


I also referred to Sara Miles work on lived spirituality, particularly her book **City of God: Faith in the Streets**, that explores her experiences taking ashes on Ash Wednesday into the streets of the Mission District of San Francisco

https://www.amazon.com/City-God-Streets-Sara-Miles/dp/1455547301/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1487645940&sr=1-1&keywords=City+of+God+Sara+Miles

There was an invitation to reflect on some of the questions that are likely to be asked during interviews I conduct as part of the research:

What does it mean for you to be a spiritual person?

What are the range of practices you include in your life because you see them as spiritual?

What is a recent experience you’ve had that you saw as spiritual, and what was it that made it a spiritual experience?

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