

“What’s so interesting about Christianity?” We were walking in Spain along the Camino de Santiago. She was then and is now a free-lance writer for Lonely Planet. She identifies with that group that sociologists call NONE: not affiliated with any religion but not atheist, just skeptical about everything! At first I thought she was being cynical or sarcastic. Then I realized she was being sincere. **What a great question!** What would you say if someone asked you what’s so interesting about Christianity? We had about 15 miles of walking to explore the question.

[...] Clara is not a believer, yet. But she does know from at least once living source that what is interesting about Christianity is not religion. What makes Christianity meaningful is the radical love of Christ at the core. This love is the healing medicine for a broken world. It is remedy that God in mercy has given to the human race and the creation so marred by sin.

I imagine Saint Paul would be offended by a word so innocuous as “interesting” when describing the reason Christianity matters to anyone. Who really cares, I hear him saying, if it’s interesting? Seriously, He would roar, there are a lot of things in this world that are interesting. Christianity is not one of them. Christianity – if you want to call it that – is God’s way of re-claiming, restoring, re-making the whole of us through the power of Jesus Christ’s love for **sinners**. I know; there’s that dreadful word again. Yet, I don’t have a better way to say that humanity has fallen from our original joy that comes from knowing and loving God, loving one another and caring for creation.

It is rare for a good person to willingly die for another, but it is not uncommon especially in situation of war and crisis conditions. Soldiers willingly, bravely, die for another. You may recall the young medic in the film Hacksaw Ridge. Desmond Dos is Christian pacifist who nevertheless wants to serve his country against the Japanese. In the heat of brutal battle he wonders aloud in prayer whether God has left him. Then he hears the voices of his wounded brothers. One by one he saves seventy-five men from death. It’s a heart breaking moment of human heroism.

Now. Imagine him returning to save the Japanese who were slaughtering them and lay wounded on the battlefield. It’s beyond the imagination of most of us. In fact, a bit too shocking. Yet, this is what Saint Paul says God did in Jesus Christ.

Paul himself described the cross of Christ as a **scandal**. It is the ungodly who are the relentless pursuit of God. Even when we were dead in our sins, enemies of God, Jesus Christ gave his life in love for us. He became medicine for our soul and not only ours but for the whole of humanity.

She asked me: what makes Christianity interesting? The radical love of God in Jesus Christ. That's all.